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FOR THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

PROMOTE, AS AN OBJECT OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE, INSTITUTIONS FOR THE GENERAL DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE.—Washington.

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OFFICIAL.

TO COMMISSIONERS AND INSPECTORS OF COMMON SCHOOLS, TRUSTEES AND OTHER OFFICERS AND INHABITANTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

In consequence of the numerous alterations made by the legislature in the statute relating to common schools, during a few years past, it has been found expedient and necessary, in many instances to dispense with the strict requisitions of the law, in favor of the officers called upon to execute its various provisions. In the mean time the most diligent efforts have been made to communicate a knowledge of those provisions, and of the instructions and decisions of the superintendent, to every inhabitant interested in their administration. It is believed that with very few exceptions, every district in the state is now furnished with a copy of the laws relating to common schools, with the accompanying instructions, and also with the volume of Decisions published in 1837; and it is, at any time within the power of any district destitute of these works, to procure them, by application to the deputy superintendents, or to this department. The prosperity and welfare of the several districts, and the efficiency of the common school system, require that all proceedings under that system, should hereafter be conducted strictly in accordance with law. There is no longer any reasonable excuse for a departure from its provisions; and the superintendent deems it his duty to insist upon a rigid and faithful observance of the requirements of the law, on the part of the officers and inhabitants of the several districts, and all others charged with the performance of any duties in relation to the common schools. Applications for dispensing with any of the requisitions of the statute, will therefore, hereafter, be denied, unless based upon imperative grounds of necessity, or arising from circumstances wholly beyond the control of the officers or inhabitants.

S. YOUNG,

Albany, May 1, 1842.

Sup't. Com. Schools.

STATE CONVENTION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

A STATE CONVENTION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS, in accordance with the generally expressed wish of these officers, will be held at UTICA on the FIRST WEDNESDAY of MAY next. The friends of education are respectfully invited to attend.

We are gratified in being authorized to announce, that the Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG, Superintendent of Common Schools, will, unless prevented by the pressure of official duties, be present at the convention.

Invitations have been extended to the friends of education in our own and sister States. The Hon. HORACE MANN, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and Prof. POTTER, of Union College, will be present, and have consented to address the convention. HENRY BARNARD, Esq. Secretary of the Connecticut Board of Education, will also be present, together with other distinguished gentlemen.

The Deputies are requested to make their arrangements to be at Utica on Tuesday evening.

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

BY HORACE MANN.

[We are enabled, by the liberality of a distinguished and untiring friend of the common schools, to lay before our readers, in this double number, the following admirable report. Arrangements have also been made to have it translated into the German, that it may reach thousands who are equally with ourselves interested in the only means of preserving the institutions of our common country.

The report needs no commendation at our hands. The name of its author is already identified with the great cause of general education, and the results of years of zealous devotion to the duties of his high office, will not be neglected by any one interested in the well-being of man. The relation of ignorance to poverty, is illustrated in these pages by the most interesting and satisfactory statistics, showing clearly, that if the sole object of the people were merely to be rich, the sure means is the improvement of their common schools.

We might also call attention to other and much more important considerations presented by this report, but we trust that enough is already said to secure its careful and general examination.—Ed.]

TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

GENTLEMEN:—At the close of another year, I present to the Board my Fifth Annual Report.

The promises referred to in my last report, of a growing interest in our Common Schools, and of their corresponding prosperity, have been fully redeemed.

In so extensive an enterprise as that of perfecting a system of means for the universal education of a people, striking results cannot be expected, in a single year. Much light must be diffused, many erroneous opinions must be rectified, many prejudices allayed, before all classes of men, working freely and voluntarily, will work harmoniously for a common end. Circumstances too, that are untoward, may, for a season, retard the advancement which they cannot overcome. Sufficient time, however, has now elapsed, since the adoption by the State, of the present plan for the extension of educational means, to enable us, like a voyager who is doubtful of his course, to take an observation, and thence to discover whether we are making progress towards the destined point.

It is now four years since I prepared the abstract of the School Returns for 1837, and made my First Annual Report to the Board.

Since that time, the amount of appropriations made by the towns for the wages and board of the teachers and fuel for the schools, has increased more than one hundred thousand dollars.

During the same time, the schools have been lengthened, on an average, almost three weeks each, which for three thousand one hundred and three, (the number of public schools kept last year in the State,) amounts in the whole to more than one hundred and seventy-five years.

The average wages of male teachers, for the same period, have advanced thirty-three per cent; those of females, a little more than twelve and a half per cent. I am satisfied that the value of the services of both sexes has increased in a much greater ratio than that of their compensation.

There were one hundred and eighty-five more public schools last year, than in 1837, which was rather less than the ratio of increase in the number of children between the ages of four and sixteen years. This favorable result is owing to the union of small districts. The number of male teachers has increased 121; that of females 521, which shows the growing and most beneficial practice of employing female teachers for small schools and female assistants in large ones.

Many towns in the State, during the last year, completed the renovation of all the school-houses within their respective limits.

From a perusal of the school committees' reports for the last year, it appears that the number of schools broken up by the insubordination of the scholars, was not more than one-tenth part what it was for the preceding year. This gain to the honor of the schools,—or rather this exemption from disgrace,—is to be attributed to the combined causes of better modes of government by the teachers, more faithful supervision by the committees, a more extended personal acquaintance on the part of parents, and especially to the practice of making a report to the towns of the condition of the schools, and the conduct of the scholars. Few boys between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one years are so depraved and shameless as not to recoil at the idea of being reported for misconduct, in open town-meeting, and of having an attested record of their disgrace transmitted to the seat of government, with the chance, should they persist in their incorrigibility for two or three years, of finding themselves historically known to other countries and times, through the medium of the school abstracts. The cases of schools brought to a violent termination, during the last year, by the insubordination of the scholars, happened almost invariably, in those towns and sections of counties in the State, where I have found the least sympathy and co-operation in my labors.

The interior condition of the schools, as to order, thoroughness, progress, manners, and so forth, not being susceptible of tabular statement or statistical exhibition, must be inferred from these outward and palpable evidences of their advancement.

These are some of the results, at which the co-workers in the noble cause of education may congratulate themselves;—results which will furnish, at once the richest reward for past efforts and the highest incentive to future exertions.

My official duties, during the past year, have been substantially the same in kind, as those detailed in former reports; but the increased interest which the Massachusetts school system has excited in other States, has imposed upon me the labor of a more extensive correspondence.

PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE FOR COUNTY CONVENTIONS.

The county common school conventions have, generally, been much better attended than during the preceding year. These annual county meetings which have now been held for five successive years in the counties of the state, have been eminently useful in diffusing information, as to a better system of school district organization, better modes of instruction, and so forth. Especially, by bringing the sympathy of numbers to bear upon individuals, they have diffused a spirit and created an energy, more worthy of a cause which carries so much of the happiness of the community in its bosom. But it seems to me that the mode of operation heretofore pursued, may now be modified with evident advantage.

To explain my views in regard to the most eligible course for the future, it will be necessary to recur for a moment to the practice of the past. At the county conventions, a considerable portion of the day has usually been spent in discussing such topics as were deemed most intimately connected with the welfare of the schools, in the section of country where the meetings were respectively held. All persons present have been invited to participate in the proceedings. Questions have been freely put and replies given. On these occasions I have always been requested to deliver an address in the course of the day, and have never felt at liberty to decline the invitation. I have also, invariably held myself ready to answer such inquiries and to meet such suggestions as might be proposed; but the friends of education assembled from the vicinity, have always been consulted as to the topics for discussion, and through the medium of a committee have generally proposed them. Out of a general similarity of circumstances and of objects, has naturally arisen a considerable degree of uniformity in the modes of proceeding; and it is with the sincerest pleasure that I bear witness, that at all times, and in all places, the greatest harmony has prevailed.

I do not mean that opinions have always coincided, but that different views have been presented in an amicable spirit; and it has oftentimes happened that some modified course,—some third measure, has been elicited, better than either of those originally suggested.

Such has been the common mode of proceeding, the advantages of which have been clearly discoverable in regard to those towns and districts which have been most regularly and fully represented at the meetings. In regard to a considerable number of towns, an entire reform in their schools has been distinctly traceable to the fact, that a few of their most worthy and influential inhabitants had been present at one of these conventions; and having listened to the counsels or been inspired by the zeal of their fellow-citizens from other towns, have returned home to diffuse the information they have obtained, and to animate others with the spirit they had caught.

But the benefits of this course are too limited. It has served the purpose of exciting an interest, but it will not consummate the work of reform. Except in some half dozen or dozen cases, the conventions have lasted but a single day. Persons coming from any considerable distance, desire to leave at an early hour that they may return home; and as some time is necessarily spent in organization and in preliminary arrangements, the day is shortened at both ends. Unlike most other conventions, too, these are attended by ladies, whose paramount influence in the cause of education renders their presence exceedingly desirable; and this is another reason for dissolving the meetings at an early hour. In addition to this, most of the counties are too large in point of territory, to allow persons whose residence is remote from the respective places of meeting, to go and return on the same day; although in some of the counties whose territory is greatest, there are individuals who have never failed of being present at them. It may be said, indeed, that other conventions, abolition or political, are attended by persons who traverse half the length of the State for the purpose; that they are continued for two or more days; or, if held but for one, that the meeting is prolonged by borrowing many hours from the night. But as an answer to this, it must be remembered that the cause of education,—the cause of ransoming our own children from the bondage of ignorance and vice,—the cause which is not merely to affect, but to control their destiny, and that of the republic, through all future time,—has not yet aroused that degree of enthusiasm which will gather crowds of people from distant places, and hold them together for days in succession, while they descant upon their own virtues and denounce the wickedness of their opponents.

But the best minds in our community have been reached. What is now wanted is to reach another class of persons, numerically greater, but having less appreciation of the value of education, and less knowledge of the means by which it should be conducted. This class of persons do not attend the county conventions, either from a lack of interest in the general subject; or because the distance is too great; or because the conventions are held in the day-time, which they appropriate to labor. But many of this class would attend such a meeting in their own town, especially if held in the evening. What seems to be desirable now is, more frequent meetings in smaller sections of territory, that sounder views and a livelier interest may be carried to the doors of those who will not go abroad to obtain them. Such has been the course pursued from the beginning, in Connecticut, whose laws on the subject have been, in many respects, very similar to our own.

Another fact having a strong bearing upon the question is, that the several counties differ so much in size and population, that a provision for one public meeting in each county, each year, though in form equal, is in reality most unequal. In one county there are forty-six towns, in another fifty-five; while in one there are but three, and in Nantucket, the limits of the town and county are coincident. In the two former the population is about one hundred thousand each, while in one of the latter it is less than ten thousand, and in the other, less than four thousand. I have endeavored as far as possible to meet this difference, by holding in some of the larger and less favorably situated counties, more meetings than the law requires; but I feel constrained to express the opinion that health and strength will fail any incumbent of the office I fill, who, in addition to its legal duties, shall undertake many supernumerary labors.

Again,—as it will be the object of a part of this report to show,—very striking contrasts exist between the different counties and towns in the State, in respect to the condition of their schools, the

amount of funds appropriated for their support, and the superintendence and encouragement bestowed upon them. Those towns and counties where the insensibility to the claims of this cause is the most profound, need the most strenuous and persevering application of means to rouse them from their lethargy, and to render them painfully alive to that inferiority of privileges under which their children are suffering;—an inferiority which is now unobserved, but which, as soon as these children enter upon the stage of life, will be revealed by a manifestation of inferiority in attainments, in power, and in all the elements of respectability and usefulness.

Although, therefore, the system of annual county meetings seems clearly the best that could have been devised, for the past, yet for the future, it seems equally clear that such a modification of the law as would provide for meetings to be held more frequently, and for smaller sections of territory, and distributed over the State more according to the population and the differing wants of different sections, would now yield superior advantages. As the grand features of the cause have, within the last few years, been brought out by discussions, addresses, and the circulation of documents, the public mind is prepared to enter upon a more particular and detailed examination of those constituent parts, all of which must be correctly understood and wisely arranged, before the system will work with ease and energy. This object will require a longer time for its accomplishment, and will be less perfectly effected under the present arrangement, than under the one here proposed.

SCHOOL RETURNS AND REPORTS.

Although the reports of the school committees, for the past year, were more voluminous than for the preceding, yet for reasons stated in the brief prefatory notice prefixed to the last abstract, the proportion of selections made from them was far less than before. It seems proper, therefore, to give a short summary of some important facts and views which are contained in the reports themselves, but which do not appear in the abstract, on account of the brevity of the selections made for it. With these, some considerations drawn from the statistical returns, will, almost necessarily, be mingled.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

The reports of the committees show that the true principles on which school districts should be formed, are now much better understood than formerly. A check has been given to the self-destructive practice of dividing and subdividing territory in order to bring the school near to every man's door. Our school districts are already so numerous, that just in the direct ratio in which the number is increased, is the value of our school system diminished. There is but one class of persons in the whole community,—and that class not only small in number, but the least entitled to favor—who are beneficially interested in the establishment of small and feeble districts. This class consists of the very poorest teachers in the State, or of those who immigrate here from other States or countries, in quest of employment as teachers; who are willing to teach for the lowest compensation, and for whose services even the lowest is too high. These teachers may safely look upon the small and feeble districts as estates in expectancy. Such districts, having destroyed their resources by dividing them, must remain stationary from year to year, amidst surrounding improvement; and hence, being unable to command more valuable services, they will be compelled to grant a small annual pension to ignorance and imbecility, and this class of teachers stands ready to be their pensionaries.

SCHOOL-HOUSES.

In preparing the abstract, I have made but very few and brief selections from the committees' reports on the subject of school-houses. It is proper, therefore, to say that the reports were characterized by a fulness and emphasis on this topic, which they have never before exhibited. The closeness of the relation which a school-house, well planned, situated, built and furnished, bears to order, good manners, intellectual proficiency, and the culture of the social and even the moral sentiments of the pupils, as well as upon the character of the district where it is situated, has not, in any previous year, been so vividly and earnestly presented; and, on the other hand, the loss, mischief, disease, disgrace, of a mean school-house, have never been illustrated by so copious a reference to facts, or enforced by such an array of argument and by such earnestness of expostulation and pungency of ridicule. In the committees' descriptions of bad school-houses may be found, in about equal proportions, most abundant materials both for tragedy and comedy.

In fine, a knowledge of the great truth is more extensively diffused and acted upon, that the Creator has established Laws, in regard to our physical well as in regard to our moral nature; that He annexes the enjoyment of health, strength and length of days to their observance, but punishes their violation with pain, sickness and premature death; that He has made no revelation in regard to the physical laws, but has left us to discover and obey them, and to receive our reward; or, at our option, but at our peril, to remain in ignorance and disobedience, and incur their certain retributions. A strained and uncomfortable posture, long enforced; sudden transitions from one extreme of temperature to another, or excessive heat at the head, while the feet are benumbed with cold; a strong light striking directly into the eye, while the book or paper is thrown into shade, and the breathing of noxious air, are offences against the wise and benign laws of nature, which never escape with impunity. Though committed in ignorance, nay, though enforced by parental authority upon thoughtless and inexperienced childhood, they must be expiated by suffering; for they belong to that extensive class of "iniquities," which, when committed by the "fathers," are "visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." It is to be earnestly hoped that the school committees will persevere in the laudable practice they have so well begun, until there shall not remain a town in the State which boasts upon paper of its temples to science, but has naught to show for them, in reality, but receptacles for penal confinement, and houses not for the cure, but for the propagation, of disease.

During the last year, the city of Salem and the village of Cabotville in Springfield, have given the best specimens of school-house architecture. Salem has erected several new school-houses, remodelled others, and put the residue in a condition of good repair. In Cabotville, the wise step was first taken of uniting two contiguous districts. The united district is erecting, and has almost completed, a beautiful house, far superior to any other in all the middle or western part of the State. Its cost is estimated at ten thousand dollars. As great attention has been paid to the model of these edifices, I deem it useful to give a plan of them at the close of this report. The plan of the house for the high school at Lowell, which has lately gone into operation, is also given, as it is different from both the others, and is very well devised. Our ingenious mechanics and architects can select any one of them as a model, or they may attempt a combination which will be an improvement upon all. These and several others, erected during the last year, are ornaments to the respective places of their location, an honor to their inhabitants, and a pledge of the elevated character of their posterity.

APPROPRIATIONS OF MONEY BY THE TOWNS.

The appropriations by the towns continue to increase. Every year, also, less and less of the money granted, is diverted from its legitimate objects, viz., the payments for the wages and board of teachers, and fuel for the schools, to defray expenses for school furniture, for repairs of the school-house, and, in some cases, to pay the rent of a room for the school. These cases of an unlawful diversion of the town's money have heretofore been very frequent; but such misapplications are now generally regarded, in their true character, as little less than an embezzlement of funds provided for one of the most sacred of objects. In proportion as these illegal practices cease, the actual increase of the sum expended for the schools, exceeds that which is shown by the statistical tables.

AMOUNT AND REGULARITY OF ATTENDANCE.

The improvement of the last year upon the preceding, in regard to the amount and regularity of attendance, is very striking.

After deducting the scholars under 4 and over 16 years of age, from the whole number who attended school, both for the year 1839-40, and the year 1840-41, (those under four from the summer, and those over 16 from the winter schools,) the increase of attendance for the last, over the preceding year, was for summer, seven thousand four hundred and twenty-eight; and for winter, eight thousand six hundred and twenty-one. Making all due allowance for the increase in the number of children, there will still remain the most gratifying evidence of improvement in the amount of attendance. It will thus be seen that a most important inroad has been made upon the pernicious practice of absence and irregularity. Some differences, of course, will be occasioned in the amount of attendance, from year to year, by the open or blocked-up condition of the roads, or by the greater or less prevalence of epidemics; and, in these respects, the last winter had some advantage over the preceding; but this great and most encour-

aging difference is mainly attributable to two causes,—first, to the exertions of the friends of education in diffusing a knowledge of the evils of irregular attendance; and secondly, to the improved condition of the school-houses, by virtue of which, a less amount of colds and coughs, of temporary indisposition or of permanent disease, was inflicted upon the children.

It is most earnestly to be hoped, and indeed, it is confidently to be expected, when the committees and other friends of the cause shall see with what a substantial reward their generous efforts to secure a better attendance upon the schools, have been crowned, they will be animated to renewed exertions for the more full accomplishment of the same end. It is almost incredible how great an evil yet remains to be overcome. To any one who at all comprehends the relation, as one of cause and effect, which a good common school education bears to the welfare of the individual and the happiness of the community, the meagre and scanty portion of that education which many of our children now obtain, in consequence of neglecting the means provided for them, is most appalling.

If the number of children under 4 years of age, who attended school during the last year, be deducted from the average* of attendance in summer, and the number of those over 16 years of age, who attended school, be also deducted from the average* of attendance in winter, the average attendance of those between 4 and 16 years of age, will stand thus:

For summer, 89,069
 " winter, 107,276

Now, allowing twelve thousand as the number of children in the State, who derive their whole education from academies and private schools, and who, therefore, are not dependent upon the common schools at all; and deducting this number from the number of children in the State, who are between the ages of 4 and 16 years, (thus, 134,392—12,000=122,392,) and the proportion of those who attended the common schools in summer, compared with the whole number dependent upon those schools, is as 89,069 to 122,392, or a very little more than one-half; and the proportion of those who attended the same schools, in winter, as compared with the whole number dependent upon them, is as 107,276 to 122,392, or considerably less than eleven-seventeenths.

Hence it appears that the amount of absence of those supposed to be dependent upon the common schools, was,

For summer, 83,323
 " winter, 65,116

Supposing this enormous privation, instead of being spread over the whole State, and being lost to the sight of men by its diffusion and by its commonness, had fallen exclusively upon a single section;—supposing that a single portion of the territory of the Commonwealth, had been selected and doomed to bear the entire loss,—in that case, the absence, even in winter, when it was more than eighteen thousand less than in summer, would have exceeded the number of all the children between 4 and 16 years of age, in the five western counties of Berkshire, Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin and Worcester. It would have exceeded, by more than ten thousand, all the children between 4 and 16 years of age, in the six south-eastern counties of Norfolk, Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes county and Nantucket; and it would have been nearly equal to all the children, between the same ages, in the three great counties of Suffolk, Essex and Middlesex;—the amount of absence in the summer, indeed, would have exceeded the number of children in the three last named counties, by more than sixteen thousand. Were all the children in either of these three great sections of the Commonwealth wholly deprived of the privileges of a common school education, would not the State—foreseeing the inevitable calamities which, in the immutable order of events, must result from rearing so large a portion of its population in ignorance—be filled with alarm, and impelled by the instinct of self-preservation, to seek for an antidote? But is the evil which this fact infallibly prophecies, any less dangerous or imminent, because, instead of shrouding one particular section of the Commonwealth in night, it is diffused over the entire surface of the State, darkening the common atmosphere, and blinding the vision of the whole people?

It is the simple instrument of the school register by which these alarming facts have been detected and exposed. I am happy to find, both from personal communications and correspondence, and from the frequent references made to it in the school com-

mittees' reports, that the value of the register is now almost universally seen and acknowledged; and that those who, through shortsightedness or perversity, opposed its introduction, are now satisfied, or, at least, silenced, by the beneficial results to which it has led. Here and there, indeed, complaint is still made by the committees, of some slothful or stupid teacher who has too little fidelity to deliver over or transmit the register to them at the close of the term, or too little skill to keep it in an intelligible manner. To prevent this delinquency, some towns have passed a vote that the teachers shall not be paid, until they have delivered over the registers to the committee.

LENGTH OF SCHOOLS.

The amount of increase in the length of the schools has been already stated. It is obvious that one of the tendencies of prolonging the school term is, to diminish the average of attendance; because, while parents and guardians are to be found who think they cannot afford to send their children during the whole even of a short term, they will be still more disinclined to send them during the whole of a long one. It is gratifying, therefore, to find that the length of the schools and the average of attendance are simultaneously increasing.

It will, of course, be understood that the average increase in the length of the schools, before referred to, does not mean that each school has been prolonged about three weeks since the year 1837. In some towns they have not been lengthened at all, and in others a week or fortnight only has been added. A considerable part of the residue is made up by the establishment of what, in this State, are called *annual schools*, that is, schools which are kept continuously through the year, with only such short vacations as are customary in all schools. This class of annual schools, which is regularly increasing, has the merit of furnishing permanent employment for a larger number of those persons who desire to make the honorable office of teaching a profession for life. One of the greatest benefits of the annual school is, that it supercedes the necessity of a quarterly, or at most, a semi-annual change of teachers. Every husbandman knows the consequence of renting his farm, each successive year, to a new lessee, each of whom in succession, is interested to carry away as much from the premises, and to leave as little, as he can. Not expecting to occupy the farm the next year, all his plans are laid with reference to the profits of the present. The teacher hired for a single term, stands in a similar relation to his employers. After making all due allowances, therefore, for the higher motives which should animate the teacher of a school, as compared with the lessee of a farm, can we expect that the interests of a school district will flourish as they ought, under circumstances so analogous to those which would impoverish an estate?

UNIFORMITY OF SCHOOL BOOKS.

On this subject, although a reform is evidently begun, yet the complaints of the committees are nearly as loud, and their expostulations as earnest as heretofore. A clearer view of the mischievous effects of this unnecessary evil, causes a less degree of it to be equally deplored. In regard to most of the other defects in our school system, some increase of expense is often the ready reply to appeals for improvement; but, in regard to text books, uniformity and economy go hand in hand, while the evil of diversity brings with it the evil of a wasteful expenditure.

The diversity of school books in the State, is also a serious inconvenience to teachers, and through them it reacts injuriously upon the schools. As a matter of fact, it will be found that but few teachers who keep school several successive years in as many different towns, supply themselves with the kinds of books used in their respective schools. They regard the expense as an insuperable obstacle, unless it is made up to them by an increase of their wages, and this the districts are unwilling to make. Hence, when the teachers enter the school, they are dependent upon their scholars for books. At the time of recitation, and when each pupil needs his own book, the teacher borrows one for his private use; or, what would generally be worse, he hears the recitation without one. Hence the scholars are not only deprived of their books when needed, but the teacher never prepares himself upon the lesson before hearing it. This previous preparation on the lessons every teacher ought to make, so that all questions arising upon them may be familiar to him, and so that he may adapt his questions to the capacities of the scholars, and not take the chance of putting the easiest questions to the most bright and forward scholars, and the hardest ones to the dullards. But

it is impossible to trace out into their innumerable ramifications, all the evils which arise from the present multiplicity of our school books.

In regard to the selection of books by committees, I have had occasion, during the last year, to notice a mistake or oversight, which deserves to be mentioned. It consists in the selection of books, which, on important points, conflict with each other, and therefore, leave teacher and pupil in doubt what course to pursue;—as, for instance, the selection of Webster's Dictionary, with Worcester's or Pierpont's Reading Books, where the rules for pronunciation contained in the former, are so different from those of the latter.

TEACHERS.

While the condition of the school is but a reflection of the image of the teacher, his qualifications are too important to be passed over in silence.—Many facts conspire to prove that, for a long period, the teachers of our schools have not been so well qualified for their duties, nor devoted themselves with so great a degree of fidelity, or under circumstances so favorable to success, as during the last school year. In many towns there has been the most earnest and importunate demand for those of satisfactory attainments and unexceptionable character. When presented as candidates, they have been subjected to a far more scrutinizing examination, both in regard to literary qualifications and to their credentials of fitness for the management of a school, than ever before. They have also received more counsel and aid from school committees, whose increased visitations to the schools have tended strongly to repress the spirit of insubordination, and to substitute diligence and good manners for idleness and mischief. In addition to this, I have conclusive reasons for believing that the teachers of the State, taken as a body, have never before exerted themselves so much to understand and to perform their duty, and to answer the rising demands of the community upon them. During the last year I met, by invitation, several large bodies of teachers—in one instance not less than two hundred, assembled together from a wide circle to interchange views, and to discuss subjects pertaining to their employment. Now this increased demand of the public for higher qualifications made known to teachers in no ambiguous manner; this cooperation and sympathy of the school committees; this advancement of teachers as a body, to a point of elevation where they stand more conspicuously in the public eye; and, above all, the stronger desire on their own part to acquit themselves creditably, and to win the honor of having their schools well reported to the towns by the committees, cannot have existed without producing effects most salutary and extensive. Yet, notwithstanding these truths, in no previous year has the voice of approval, emanating from the reports, been so frequently drowned in that of condemnation. In no previous year, have the committees drawn the line of demarcation with such breadth and clearness, between teachers as they are, and teachers as they should be; nor ever before has there been any thing like the indignant and heartfelt remonstrance against the usurpation of a teacher's duties and responsibilities, by ignorance and inaptitude and self-conceit. The explanation of this is, not a greater severity or uncharitableness of judgment, on the part of the committees, but a clearer perception of long-existing, but previously unrecognized wants. The demand for better qualifications has outstripped the supply. A demand for better teachers may arise almost instantaneously on a perception of the incompetency of existing ones. But the supply requires time and labor; for a good teacher cannot be prepared without delay, as a merchant or manufacturer fills an order for goods.—Even Adam Smith excepts education from the mercantile or economical law, that the supply will follow and equal the demand. "In every age, even among the heathen," says Martin Luther, "the necessity has been felt of having good schoolmasters, in order to make any thing respectable of a nation. But surely we are not to sit still and wait until they grow up of themselves. We can neither chop them out of wood, nor hew them out of stone. God will work no miracles to furnish that which we have means to provide. We must, therefore, apply our care and money to train up and make them." In accordance with this idea, it seems to me that justice and equity towards teachers demand that the tone of condemnation should not rise to a higher pitch, until opportunities and inducements shall have been offered to them for better preparation; and that every friend of education who insists upon qualifications superior to the present, is bound to do his part towards furnishing facilities and encouragements by which they can be acquired. We cannot consistent-

*In the Report of last year, page 66, the word "aggregate" was inadvertently printed in these two places, instead of the word "average." Although the sense is apparent from the context, yet it is deemed advisable to refer to the error.

ly denounce a state of things which we do nothing to improve.

HOW TO JUDGE OF THEIR FITNESS TO TEACH.

In treating of the subject of teachers, the remark is not infrequently made by the committees, that the law exacts of them a duty impossible to be fulfilled. They acknowledge that they can determine the literary qualifications of a candidate; but they aver that they have no means of ascertaining his moral worth, his ability to communicate what he knows, or the soundness of his judgment and discretion in the general management of a school. That there is some apparent justness in this defensive allegation, I would not deny; but I beg leave most respectfully to inquire whether it is not set forth much too broadly. In other words, are there not certain tests or criteria, which the committee may adopt, which would, at least in the great majority of cases, save them from imposition and the mortification of having given an undeserved approval. If the law really commands impossibilities, it should be repealed; if it does not, its requisitions are too important to be practically annulled. The language of the statute is, "The school committee shall require full and satisfactory evidence of the good moral character of all instructors who may be employed in the public schools in their town; and shall ascertain by personal examination, their literary qualifications and capacity for the government of schools." [R. S., Ch. 28, § 13.]

Here, *moral character* is made a first and indispensable condition of approval. In cases, where the candidate is a neighbor or a townsman, his moral character will, of course, be known to the committee. If he comes from a distance, they must ordinarily rely on his credentials; but it is still within their province to decide upon the sufficiency of those credentials, both as to the fulness of their import, and their authenticity or the trustworthiness of the individuals whose signatures they bear. Here, it is worthy of their consideration, why so many of our teachers go to a great distance from home to keep school. In very many instances, towns which are fifty or a hundred miles apart, seem to have exchanged teachers. When a candidate, with glowing recommendations, comes from another State, or from a distant part of our own, in quest of a school, the inquiry very naturally arises, why his distinguished services were not in demand nearer home. Sometimes, indeed, there exist good reasons to lead a person abroad from the town of his nativity or residence; and such reasons, it is always to be supposed, will rebut the adverse presumption, which so naturally arises when a man who aspires to the moral dignity of a teacher is found itinerating the country, like a pedlar, to dispose of his services;—and this too, (as in some instances, has actually happened,) after examining the school abstracts, to learn in what towns he would be most likely to find purchasers, indifferent to the quality of his wares.

In regard to the testimonials presented, I would suggest the propriety of the committees' entering the names, in their book of records, of all persons who have signed a certificate of good moral character in behalf of any candidate. The law requires each school committee to keep a book of records; and in this book the names of all the candidates they approve are, or should be, entered. With these, they might also enter the names of all persons who have vouched for their character; and should the committee, after such fidelity of examination, on this point, as a prudent and discreet man would exercise in regard to his own personal interests, find that they have been deceived, they can then exculpate themselves before the town, by reporting the facts and exposing the names of those individuals by whose recommendations, whether fraudulent or heedless, (and, in such a case, heedlessness differs little from fraud,) they have been innocently misled.

The next requisite mentioned in the statute, respects the *literary qualifications* of the candidate and his *capacity for the government of a school*. Here, although the committees concede that they have the means of determining how well the candidate can spell or read, and how much knowledge of grammar, arithmetic or geography, he possesses, by propounding questions or exercises, on these several subjects; yet they aver that they can apply no gauge for measuring the capacity of the channel through which these attainments may flow out to fertilize the field of his labors. And again, it is said by the committees that it is impracticable for them to do any thing more than form a general conjecture of the candidate's capacity for government;—that is, his power of determining, at what times, under what circumstances, what amount of, and in what manner, assistance, encouragement or reproof, should be administered to his pupils. Hence, while it is granted on

all hands, that the ability to impart knowledge, and the power of managing and governing a school, are as important as scholarship itself,—nay, that without the two former qualities, the latter is rendered nugatory;—it is maintained that one only of the three requisites can be subjected to a test, while the other two must be left to conjecture or chance. Now if this be so,—if two points are necessarily left in doubt, for one that is determined,—if the committee, after availing themselves of all aids, and performing their duty in the most faithful manner, have double the cause for fear that they have for hope; and, so far as an examination is relied upon as a security against incompetence, there are still two chances that their approved candidate will fail, for one that he will succeed; then, indeed, both the committee and the public are placed by the law in a painful predicament. According to this view of the case, the former are obliged to certify to important facts without the means of knowledge, and the latter to rely upon a guaranty, when the chances that it will prove delusive are as two to one.

Before joining in these strictures upon the law, we ought to investigate the means by which it can be observed; because requisitions which aim at so salutary an object, ought not to be rescinded, unless their execution is impracticable.

In the first place, it is obvious that the ability to impart knowledge depends very much upon the modes adopted for the purpose. The greatest talent will be nearly frustrated, if subjected to the use of untoward or inadequate methods. All the vividness and coherence of knowledge are lost in the employment of obscure or circuitous media for its communication. Some of the profoundest and most useful sciences owe their perfection as much to the art which has prepared their instruments, as to the talent that has developed their principles; and the knowledge of a La Place or a Bowditch would have been almost unavailing without the aid of such workmen as Dolland and Fraunhofer. Every one conversant with schools must have observed that a much less degree of skill, availing itself of the best methods and instruments, will accomplish more than a much greater degree, which is deprived of the appropriate means of elucidation. For instance, in regard to arithmetic and geography, nothing can supply the want of a blackboard. It is next to impossible,—if, indeed, it is not wholly so,—to teach either of these branches thoroughly or rapidly without it; or,—which is of still greater importance,—to give the pupil those vivid and ingrained conceptions which will remain a part of the very substance of the mind, while life lasts, instead of such superficial impressions as will fade away by the end of the term. This cheap, simple, and most effective piece of apparatus, the blackboard, which a few years ago was not known in our schools, is now deemed invaluable and indispensable by all the best teachers in the State. Now, can any thing be more easy, in the examination of a candidate, than to inquire whether he has the command of the blackboard,—in what studies, and in what manner he would use it? And should the candidate reply that he has never been accustomed to use it, for working out problems in arithmetic, for drawing maps in geography, for spelling, &c.; or that he has tried it, and then discarded it as valueless; can any thing be more certain than that such a candidate is destitute of aptness to teach and unworthy of a certificate of approval?

So, in regard to the female candidate, who proposes to take charge of small children;—she, certainly, will fail to provide for them the most agreeable and instructive occupation; she cannot give them one-half the intellectual knowledge she might otherwise impart,—if she does not know how to use the blackboard, in connection with the slate and pencil, for teaching the letters of the alphabet, and rules for sentence-making,—such as the mode of commencing paragraphs, the use of capitals, hyphens, pauses, &c.,—and for commencing to teach the invaluable art of drawing. A few inquiries, on this subject, would determine, to a great extent, the question of the candidate's aptness to teach.

When a visitor, on entering a school-house, sees a blackboard, thrown aside into the wood-shed, or lumbering the entry, but finds none in the school-room, he may propose a short stay in that school, so far as the hope of seeing any thing instructive to himself or creditable to the teacher, is concerned.

READING.

Is a branch of study of such importance, that different modes of teaching it project a beneficial or a baneful influence over the whole future life, and raise or depress the grade of individual intelligence and capacity, into whatever sphere of action the young reader may be afterwards thrown. The metaphor would not one whit overstate the literal truth, were we to say that the teacher, in forming his pupils'

habits of reading, encircles their heads with a bright and radiating light, or wraps around them a cloudy medium, which they will carry through life, to enlighten or obscure every object about them, wherever they may go. And is it not easy for the committee to inquire of the candidates, whether it is their invariable habit to search out, and to require the scholars to explain the meaning of all words not understood; and, after every reading lesson is completed, to call upon the class for a synopsis or general statement, in their own language, of its contents? If a teacher omits these practices, so far is he from being apt to teach reading, that he is apt, nay, certain, not to teach it; but, day after day, to obliterate from the minds of his pupils both the capacity and desire to master the noble instrument of language.

In regard, also, to the first requisite in the mechanical part of reading, viz. pronunciation, cannot the committee ask the candidate whether it is his invariable habit to have a pronouncing dictionary always at hand, to which, in all cases of doubt, he can immediately refer, not only to ascertain the true pronunciation of the words in our own language, but the true pronunciation of scriptural and of geographical proper names, and also, of such Greek and Latin proper names, as occur in the text books? The general rules for pronouncing English proper names differ widely from those by which the pronunciation of proper names in other languages, whether ancient or modern, is determined; and hence, the pupil in pronouncing the latter according to the analogy of the former, will commit frequent, and, to an educated ear, very ridiculous mistakes. But a pupil will naturally follow the analogies of his native tongue, unless he is directed by another standard. What a misfortune to a child to be bred up in the imitation of an outlandish brogue-like or barbarous pronunciation, which, like some visible and offensive deformity of person, he will display wherever he goes; or, if he becomes conscious of his vulgarity, and aspires to correct it, months and years of effort will hardly suffice for its eradication. These consequences depend upon the teacher, for it is as easy for a child, at first, to learn right as to learn wrong pronunciation or articulation; and how can a candidate be considered worthy of a certificate who overlooks so essential an item in the list of a teacher's qualifications?

So if a candidate answers affirmatively to the question, whether in teaching arithmetic, he gives to his pupil, as a first lesson in this study, all those signs of multiplication, division, proportion, and of the square and cube root, which are found at the beginning of some of our school arithmetics, he shows by his very answer, his ignorance of one of the first and simplest rules by which a teacher should be guided;—viz., not to teach barren signs, unaccompanied by ideas; but to wait, until in the course of advancement, the pupil comes to the subject-matter to which each sign belongs, and then to give the sign which typifies or symbolizes it.

GEOGRAPHY.

In beginning to teach geography to young children, the lessons found at the commencement of our school books, are not the ones which should come first in order. Space and form are the elements of physical geography; as time is of history; and a child may as well be set to studying history, who has no idea that the world he lives in is older than his grandparents, as to studying our common text books of geography before his mind has been led outward and outward into space, and has acquired definite ideas of the forms with which the surface of the earth is occupied. The localities about the school-house, the roads or streets in the vicinity, with all the striking objects which characterize them, should be the subjects of the first lessons in this important branch of study. These should be minutely described and delineated upon the blackboard, before referring to any object beyond the visible horizon. An image of the brook which the child may have crossed in coming to school; of the pond in the neighborhood on whose margin he may have sported; of the hill to whose summit he may have climbed, should be distinctly pictured upon the mind, to be referred to as *units of measure*, when in the course of his studies he comes to rivers and lakes and mountains, a hundred or a thousand times wider, broader or higher than any he has ever seen. Before this preliminary step is taken, it is pernicious to require a pupil to commit to memory definitions of zenith and nadir, of latitude and longitude, and those other points, lines and circles,—the mere creatures of abstraction,—which are used in elucidating the *Doctrine of the Sphere*.

In many books of geography, the natural features of the earth are treated of under the head of its civil or political divisions. The pupil, for instance, in learning the hydrography of the Mississippi valley,

takes up the subject in fragments. He begins, perhaps, with the tiers of States on the eastern or left bank of the Mississippi; and in learning what are their respective climates, soils, productions, manners, laws, religion, &c., he learns also, what particular branches or tributaries of that great river rise in, or flow through each of those States. He then takes the States on the western or right bank, in their order. Thus, though every stream belonging to the "Father of Waters," is brought under his notice; yet his knowledge of them is disconnected, he has acquired it with long intervals between his lessons, and it is incoherent and mingled with a variety of other facts; for he must have spent considerable time, and have travelled over more than a dozen States to compass it. But suppose the teacher should lead the mind of the pupil at once to the mouth of the Mississippi, and then, in imagination should soar with him to such an elevation above the surface of the earth, that the immense valley beneath could be surveyed by a single glance of the eye, bounded on the west by the grand wall of the Rocky Mountains, and on the east by that of the Alleghenies; the river itself presenting the likeness of a vast tree, its main channel forming a trunk thousands of miles in length, while its numerous tributaries represent branches of thousands of miles expanse,—all seen as one object, and therefore having coherence, and giving vividness and depth of impression; can any one doubt that a better knowledge of the hydrography of the Mississippi valley could, in this mode, be acquired in a single day, than most of our children now possess when they leave school, after the study of years? Again, let the single fact be pointed out to a pupil, that a man may travel from Gibraltar, in a northeasterly direction, to Russia and the Frozen Ocean, and not cross a river of any considerable size, though he would pass near the fountain-heads of all the great rivers in Europe; and it will give him a clearer and more lasting impression of the course of the European rivers, of the system of mountains, and of the general face and slopes of the country, and therefore, of its climate, than would be acquired by studying the map of Europe a month in the ordinary way. Every part of the globe admits of being viewed under these comprehensive aspects; and it is surely within the power of the committee, by an examination of two minutes' length, to ascertain whether the candidate is familiar with these methods, or whether his practice is confined to hearing droning recitations from a book. Emphatically, it is necessary in the study of physical geography, and of the boundaries or civil divisions of States, to have constant recourse to the blackboard. In hearing a recitation in the common way, no teacher can certainly tell whether his pupil is not thinking of the text book;—of the page, the paragraph, of the lines and words, where a fact is stated;—but if a pupil can delineate upon the blackboard the form of an island, a coast, or a country, the teacher then knows that the representation which comes out from the ends of his fingers, must have been copied from an image on the tables of his mind.

I say nothing here of the use of outline maps, or of the terrestrial globe, as unfortunately, so few of our schools are provided with them.

GRAMMAR.

In regard to grammar, too, it is equally certain that a brief series of questions will disclose the teacher's mode of proceeding, and thus establish or set aside his claim to competency in this important department. If the teacher is conversant with no better way than to put a common text book of grammar into the hands of beginners, and to hear lessons recited by them, day after day, concerning definitions and rules, while, as yet, they are wholly ignorant of the classes of words defined, and have no conception of those relations which the rules express,—whatever other qualifications such a person may have, he, surely, has no aptness to teach grammar. The question is often asked, when, or at what age, children should begin to study grammar? If it is to be studied in the way above described, one would be almost tempted to reply, *Never*. But, if learned in a manner conformable to the order of nature, scholars may commence its study, at almost any age. The perceptive powers, or those faculties by which we recognize separate existences or individualities, and qualities or properties, are developed at a very early period of life. Any child six years old, if his mind is skillfully led to the exercise, will be delighted to recall and repeat the names of hundreds of things with which he is familiar,—such as the objects of sight, hearing, taste, and smell, the appetites, as hunger and thirst, and the emotions, as love, hope, gratitude, &c. His attention may then be directed to the obvious fact, that each one of these names stands for thousands of individual objects, as the word *house* for all houses, *horse* for all horses, *color* for all colors, &c. He will then be pleased with knowing how we dis-

tinguish the different individuals of these respective classes from each other, by the use of descriptive epithets, as an old or a new house, a red or a white one, a large or a small, a high or a low, a beautiful or an ugly, &c. Thus, without mentioning the names, *noun* and *adjective*, the elementary ideas of those parts of speech are distinctly formed, and perceived to be wholly different from each other. The attention of the pupil may then be turned to the actions, and motions, and states of being, of all objects, animate or inanimate. He may be made to perceive that some actions are confined to the agent putting them forth, while other actions pass beyond the agent and affect other persons or things. So, in regard to one of the modifications of this last class of ideas, which so often proves a stumbling-block to beginners in grammar, viz., tense or time. There is not a child in the State, of average capacity, and five years of age, who cannot understand the three great divisions of time,—past, present and future,—as well as a philosopher. These three divisions being clearly perceived, it will then be easy for him to subdivide past time into the three portions which we designate as imperfect, perfect and pluperfect, (unhappily, because the first two words, in this relation, have no analogy to their signification, when found elsewhere,) and also to subdivide the future into two parts. Now, all this not only can, but should be done, without touch or sight of a grammar book; and, if well done, the pupil will possess an extensive knowledge of things, of qualities, of actions and of relations, to which the technical names and rules of the text book may be afterwards intelligently applied.

And, in the later stages of this study, the whole question of fitness to teach, may be determined by the inquiry whether, on the one hand, the teaching is to consist of a senseless repetition of case, number and gender, of mood, tense and rule; or, on the other, in such an analysis, both of the language and the thought of an author, as leads out into rhetoric, as it regards the form and structure of the expressions, and into logic, as it regards the sequence and coherence of the ideas. In any thing worthy to be called grammar, both the style and sense of a writer are to be carefully investigated. The place assigned in each sentence, to its principal idea or proposition; the juxtaposition of relatives to their antecedents, and of adjuncts to their principals; the manner in which collateral and subordinate ideas are introduced, so as never to be mistaken for the principal or leading ones; the concealment, the hiding-up, as it were, of expletive, auxiliary and less significant words, instead of giving them prominence; the eligibility of the words selected, over their synonyms; the easy transition from clause to clause, harmonizing with the gradation from thought to thought; the steady accumulation of meaning, with each additional expression, until, at last, a few words,—perhaps a single word, with epigrammatic force reveals the fulness and significance of the perfected sentence;—these, and such as these, are the main, if not almost the only points, which can be useful to the future writer or speaker; and these, therefore, are the points to which the attention of the student in grammar should be directed. It is obvious that a pupil may describe the relation and properties of each word in a sentence, and yet leave their combined force wholly untouched. The beautiful diction, the profound meaning and condensed energy of such authors as Milton, Pope and Young, whose writings are so often selected for the parsing exercises of our schools, are not brought out and displayed,—not even a glimpse of them is revealed,—by the recitative and ding-dong of government and agreement, of gender, number and case, mood, tense and rule. So far as grammar is concerned, therefore, no person can be apt to teach, whose course of study has not led him to form an acquaintance with approved methods.

The opinion is often entertained, that mere fluency of utterance confers an ability to communicate knowledge, or aptness to teach. Some opportunity for observation, coincides with the deductions of reason, in leading me to believe that this is a mistake. In attempting to unfold a subject to one devoid of all notions respecting it, the danger of failing lies rather on the side of a too rapid, than of a too moderate enunciation. We are accustomed to refer to the quickness of thought, as one of the most striking emblems of velocity; and, in our comparisons, we speak indiscriminately of the swiftness of lightning, and of the swiftness of thought. If we are referring to our thoughts on subjects with which we have been long familiar, the illustration is appropriate and expressive; for, in such cases, the mind darts from end to end of an immense chain of associations, within an inappreciable lapse of time. But the very reverse is true when we are acquiring ideas on new and unacquainted themes. If the thoughts of a mature and practised mind are, almost without a figure, called *winged*, because of their swiftness, those of an imma-

ture and unpractised one, may, with equal propriety, be called *unfledged*, from the slowness and unsteadiness of their motions. The common mistake may have arisen from a want of discrimination between the emotions or affections of children, and their intellectual operations. The former are quick, the latter comparatively slow. Aptness to teach, therefore, seems to require, not rapidity, but great deliberateness, in communicating instruction; and the order in which ideas are presented is indefinitely more important than the number offered in a given time.

But without glancing further, in this hasty and necessarily incomplete manner, at other tests or criteria of aptness to teach our common school studies, it may be added that the committee, in five minutes' conversation with the candidate, can draw out his views in regard to the number of studies which, with the greatest advantage, can be simultaneously pursued; the proper intervals between alternations from one study to another; the frequency of reviews; the propriety of using keys, question-books, &c.

It seems to be universally conceded that, as scholars advance in years, they can apply their minds, for a longer period, to a specific subject. Little children are incapable of long-continued application to the same thing. Their attention flits from point to point. As their hand seizes quickly upon an object, and as quickly loosens its grasp, as their feet bound from the earth as soon as it is touched, so their minds catch single glimpses of one subject, and with the volatility of a humming-bird, fly to another. The whole organization,—mind, brain and limb,—vibrates to the pulsations of the heart, which are rapid but weak. But, with the advance of time, and the repetitions of exercise, the power of concentration strengthens. As the mind becomes more mature, it pursues its investigations longer at once, and with a speed accelerated in the ratio of the time. It seems to perceive, almost intuitively, that it would lose momentum and head-way by an interruption of the continuity of thought; and, therefore, it adheres to the same train of ideas more tenaciously and for a longer period. Yet, notwithstanding the obviousness of these principles, it is a general fact, in regard to all our schools, that the younger scholars have far less variety and change in their exercises than the older. A monotonous course is enforced upon the young mind, while it is quick and volatile; but as its power of concentrating itself upon any given subject increases, it is subjected to the dispersive influence of rapid changes. It must be a great reformation which will remedy this defect in our schools, and it is one imperatively called for.

Closely allied with the preceding topic, is that of the alternation of studies, or the time to be occupied by one study before leaving it for another. In some schools, the periods of study and of recitation succeed each other, every ten minutes; while, in another, the study of a single branch is enforced upon the scholars for three consecutive months, which seems to give no more relief to the fatigued faculties, nor opportunity for renovating their strength by alternate periods of repose, than would be allowed to the muscles, if each pupil were compelled to stand on one leg, for the same length of time.

On the subject of reviews, the practice is not less various and contradictory. In some schools, a review of the lesson just recited, is always included in the lesson given out. In some schools, the Wednesday and Saturday of every week, are appropriated to a review of all the lessons of the two days which respectively preceded them. In others, again, the review-day comes semi-monthly or monthly; and the number of schools is not small, in which there is no review until the school term is considerably advanced, when it is commenced in earnest, and pursued to the exclusion of everything else, until the day, and for the purpose, of examination.

Again, in some schools question-books are used, and the practice grows up into a common law of the school, that the questions put by the teacher, shall be, both in number and form, precisely like those contained in the book. In other schools, the teacher's whole aim is to ascertain how much of the subject-matter of the lesson has been mastered by the pupil,—the formal questions in the book being disregarded by both parties. The difference between the minds of pupils whose lessons are studied and recited in these different methods is, that between emptiness and fulness. In some schools an arithmetical key is in constant use, by means of which the pupil always knows the number or places of figures, and the value of them, at which he is to aim; and this knowledge becomes one of the elements in calculating the process by which the problem is to be worked. In this case, arithmetic degenerates into the art of obtaining, from known data, on unknown principles, a known result, whether right or wrong; instead of being that perfect science which, proceeding from known data, on known principles, evolves

the true, but before unknown result, with infallible certainty. If the answers to all the practical questions raised in the business transactions of life, were known beforehand, few would be so simple as to go through with a formula to obtain them. But either the answer must be known from some foreign source, or the principles must be known by which it can be deduced. In life, the answer will never be known beforehand; and if the principles for obtaining it are also unknown, the result will be universal error.

ARITHMETIC.

Perhaps the importance of no other common school study can be made more obvious and palpable to all pupils than that of arithmetic. Almost every week, if not every day, the young arithmetician, in solving his imaginary questions, disposes of such quantities of goods as would make or ruin the fortune of a wholesale dealer; he makes calculations respecting such sums of money as but few capitalists have the disposal of; and he balances such heavy accounts between supposed merchants, as would decide the fortune of any actual merchant in Boston or New-York, were the sums and quantities dealt with, real, and not fictitious. All these masses, whether of commodities, or of silver or gold, the pupil decides upon, without a cent in his pocket, or any guarantor for his solvency. Now, the beauty of the process is, that if he makes a mistake, however serious, no injustice is done to any body, nor does any pecuniary loss accrue to himself. But here he is in search of those principles, by virtue of which, as subsequent occasions to apply them may arise in the actual business of life, he can decide all questions respecting real commodities and real sums, without mistake, and therefore without loss to himself or injustice to others. Principles, then, should be the only object of the pupil's pursuit. But if arithmetic is studied, not for the purpose of mastering principles, but for the purpose of finding certain answers corresponding to those in the key, it becomes too worthless an object to satisfy the desire or stimulate the ambition of any child whose faculties have not been misled or perverted. Were the attention of the classes in arithmetic directed to the vast amounts of money, of stocks, and of merchandise, mentioned in their text books, and were they then led to imagine the school-house to be like a warehouse, an exchange or a market-place, where all these things were bought and sold and their values adjusted, and themselves the agents or owners by whom the business was transacted, the puerile ambition of finding the answer contained in the key, would be lost in a sense of reality and responsibility, and all necessity of resorting to the pernicious stimulus of emulation, or rivalry with classmates, would be superseded.

In many of the arithmetical keys, formulas are given for the solution of all the more difficult questions, so that the difficulty is cancelled as soon as it is created, and the hardest questions in appearance, are the easiest in fact. This seems about as wise as it would be, under pretence of tasking or testing the muscular strength of a child, to put a burden of great weight into his hands to be carried a certain distance, but the moment he receives it, to take up both himself and the burden, and carry him to, and set him down quietly at the goal, without his exerting a muscle. In other schools, the use of keys is prohibited. The pupil is conducted to no answer, except under the guidance of principles; and he soon comes to rely upon principles with equal implicitness and delight, by daily witnessing the fidelity with which they lead him to truth.

Now it is certain that such conflicting practices cannot all have a foundation in reason and nature.—If any of them are right, others of them must be very wrong; and the children of the State are suffering under the erroneous methods. Correct opinions concerning them all, are involved in the qualification of aptness to teach; and by ascertaining the views of a candidate respecting them, the committee can relieve themselves from much uncertainty and hazard in regard to his competency.

GOVERNMENT.

Not a little, also, may be known of a candidate's capacity for the government of a school, by hearing even a brief expression of his views upon that subject, aided by an observation of his personal demeanor and bearing. If a teacher does not hold it to be a violation of one of his most solemn duties to indulge in expressions of contempt, in ridicule or anger towards his scholars, however stockish or contemptuous they may be, he is destitute of one of the first desiderata in the capacity to govern. Such a teacher, indeed, may overpower and subdue a school by brute force, as a conqueror subjugates a people and holds them in bondage by the terrors of fire and sword.—But such a government is tyrannical, not paternal. The young and the insane resemble each other in be-

ing creatures of impulse, rather than of reason; and the expression of wrath in a superior, either produces its likeness in them, or else it overwhelms them with a stupefying, deadening sense of fear. No lineament of anger should ever deform the face of one who has the superintendence of either class.—The minds of children, especially, should be kept sacred from such desecration.

The same inference, also, must be drawn, in regard to capacity for governing a school, if the teacher has no resources for the prevention of idleness or the suppression of a mischievous or disobedient spirit, but the infliction of punishment. So, too, if he has no expedients for enkindling a love of knowledge and a zeal for improvement, among his pupils, but the low and anti-social one of rivalry,—that is, a desire to surpass one's classmates or fellow students, for the sake of winning a prize, or of standing, conspicuous, at the head of a class, at the final examination of the school. In fine, if emulation and fear are his great motive powers for securing proficiency and obedience, he wants capacity to govern.

The power of inflicting bodily pain is the lowest form of superiority. It is the instinctive resort of brute animals, which, having no resources in intelligence, appeal to force. It prevails most universally amongst the most savage tribes, where superiority of muscular power gives superiority of social rank, and the regal title is conceded to the strongest. But the moment a barbarian takes a single step in advance of his fellows; the moment he can build a better canoe, or speed an arrow with a surer aim, or can prognosticate the weather, or trail an enemy with a keener eye, he acquires a power over his tribe, independently of fear; and commands respect and precedence, without inflicting pain. And so, through all the higher grades of intellectual and moral development. Every new accession of spiritual power supersedes, to the same extent, the necessity of appealing to the brute part of human nature, in establishing a control over it; and, so far as any one is obliged to make this appeal, he falls short of that noble, intellectual and moral ascendancy, to which all should aspire, and which some have already attained. As civilization has advanced, the wheel of torture has been arrested, and the instruments of terror and affliction have ceased to be used, as stimulants to duty or motives to obedience; nay, the progress of civilization is measured by the extent to which, with equal efficacy, the higher motives have been substituted for the lower, in the government of men. Any person, therefore, at the present day, who is acquainted only with the lowest in the whole scale of motives,—who, in establishing his authority, begins back where the brute begins, and where the savage begins, can have no approvable capacity for the government of a school. And can the school committee, who have not made a single inquiry of the candidate respecting his views of government, and who have not sought for information respecting him from other sources; can they give a hasty approval, after a brief examination, and then justify themselves by throwing the responsibility on the law? When, on visiting a school, they witness the inexpressible injury which is caused by the application of false principles, or by proceeding in ignorance of all principles; can they hold themselves fully exonerated from the charge of neglect, on the ground that the law requires of them an impossibility, when they have approved the candidate, without seeking to ascertain his views on this momentous subject?

I would by no means be understood to express the opinion that, in the present state of society, punishment, and even corporal punishment, can be dispensed with, by all teachers, in all schools, and with regard to all scholars. Order is emphatically the first law of a school-room. Order must be preserved, because it is a pre-requisite to every thing else that is desirable. If a school cannot be continued with order, it should not be continued without it, but discontinued. After all motives of duty, of affection, of the love of knowledge and of good repute, have been faithfully tried, and tried in vain, I see not why this "strange work" may not be admitted into the human, as well as into the divine government. Nor will it do to prohibit the exercise of this power altogether, because it is sometimes abused. The remedy for abuse is not prohibition, but discretion. This, however, is certain, that when a teacher preserves order and secures progress, the minimum of punishment shows the maximum of qualifications.

I pass by the subject of emulation, and the expediency of the committees' inquiring of the candidate whether he means to employ it as one of the motive powers of his school, with a single remark. The remark is, that throughout the State, the best and most successful teachers—when they are not controlled by positive regulations of the committees—are more and more generally discarding its use. Their reasons are, that the decisions founded upon it are al-

ways difficult and often unjust; that it tends to withdraw the mind from a love of knowledge for its own sake, to the desire of a conspicuous position and of ostentatious displays; that knowledge acquired under this stimulus, will be less thorough and less permanent than if pursued and obtained for the intrinsic pleasure which its acquisition for its own sake, always imparts; that, after a sufficient time has elapsed to form comparisons and to foresee the chances of success, the number of competitors is reduced to a few, the incentive ceasing, through hopelessness to operate on the many; that its tendency is to engender alienation, uncharitableness and envy among rivals; and, finally, that under the system of emulation as practised in our schools, those unhallowed passions of cupidity and of ambition will be nursed into strength, which, in after life, will corrupt the mercantile community with the spirit of speculation and fraud and desolate the political one with the tempests of party strife. To this, I know it may be said in reply, that the instinct or propensity of emulation is implanted in us by nature, and therefore to be cultivated like any other natural endowment. So, also, are the instincts of anger, and pride, and avarice, and war, and of other selfish or sensual passions, implanted in us by nature. One answer applies equally to them all. From some cause, they are too strong already. They do not need inflaming, but repression. They are central fires burning beneath our feet, and already bursting up around us, and threatening to consume the most sacred and valued institutions of the land; and, like the surface beneath which a volcano labors, it will require a century for them to cool down to a habitable temperature, even if no new fuel adds rage to their flames. The Christian virtues are found to have an efficacy vastly superior, as motives to exertion; and they are infinitely more worthy to be employed, though we should only take into the account the highest welfare of children, in regard to their mortal and worldly relations.

HAS THE CANDIDATE PREPARED HIMSELF TO TEACH

But there is one inquiry which the committee may, in all cases, make of the candidate; and a negative answer to which, especially with regard to those who have had little or no experience, would go very far towards deciding the general question of competency. This inquiry is, whether the candidate has ever sought to obtain a specific preparation, either by attending a course of instruction under some competent master, or by carefully studying the best works on the subject, and by acquainting himself with the modes and processes adopted by the best teachers. Such opportunities now exist, at those light-spreading institutions, the Normal Schools. If a thorough course of instruction at these is too expensive, or requires too much time, there are numerous works on the subject of education, at once easily accessible and invaluable, which any person worthy to be intrusted with the interests of a school, can find, or make, an opportunity to read. 'The Teacher,' by the Rev. Jacob Abbott; 'Palmer's Prize Essay, or the Teacher's Manual,' 'The Teacher Taught,' by Rev. Emerson Davis; Miss Edgeworth's 'Practical Education'; 'Progressive Education,' a translation from the French of Madame Necker de Saussure; The works of Pestalozzi, Wyse, Simpson, Wilderspin, Stow, and others, together with the Lectures of the American Institute of Instruction, and the educational periodicals which, for the last few years, have been published, both in Europe, and in this country;—all these instructive works leave a candidate wholly without excuse for his neglect, if without any preparation by training or study, he aspires to a station, where he will, to no inconsiderable extent, reproduce and multiply by fifties and by hundreds, his own style of manners, modes of thought, and aspects of moral feeling. Indeed, after all the light which has now been spread abroad upon this subject, the single fact, that a person proposes to assume a station where he will impart influences to the minds of the young which will abide with them and constitute a part of their being and character while life lasts, without having first most anxiously and perseveringly sought to fit himself for the momentous duty, is sufficient to decide the question of moral character! For, how can any one sustain a claim to justice, benevolence, or any other element of morality, who offers to render a service for which he is consciously incompetent; or, if not conscious of his incompetence, the case is aggravated, because such a fact would argue the lowest state of ignorance,—that ignorance, namely, which does not know that there is any thing to be learned.

Suppose a person, merely because he might be out of employment, or because, for any other reason of health or ease, he should prefer in-door to out-door occupation, should establish himself in the business of an apothecary, and, owing to his utter ignorance of the *Materia Medica*, the first prescription he should

fill, should cause instantaneous death. Standing in the midst of a bereaved family, surrounded, perhaps, by a group of orphan children, would it be any exculpation for him to say, "I knew no better?" The answer is, it was his duty to know better, or to abstain from the business; and the spirit of the commandment, "thou shalt not kill," applies to him in all its penal force; but no more fully than the injunction to "train up a child in the way he should go," attaches to every one who assumes the guardianship of children. An inextinguishable desire to promote the greatest good of others, is one of the most valuable qualifications in a teacher; and no one, over whose actions this desire is enthroned, can stifle or appease the upbraidings of conscience, under the conviction that he is doing children harm, or that he is not doing them the greatest practicable amount of good. To prepare himself for this duty, any person who is worthy to fill the sacred office of teacher, will study and meditate; he will seek information from all sources, and daily replenish and fortify his mind with the most elevating and sustaining motives.

It is one of the offices of a teacher to provide aliment for the mind, just as the parent who is attentive to the natural wants of his children, provides aliment for the body. There is the closest analogy between these relations. What is given by either will be assimilated, by the mysterious processes of nature, and become a part of the child's system, bodily or mental. If the food, furnished by the natural parent be sufficient and nourishing, and supplied in accordance with the laws of health, then the whole corporal frame will thrive, and grow in stature and might; but, on the other hand, if it be scanty or unhealthful, then emaciation and debility of the physical system will betray the parental improvidence. And, so of the mental powers;—if nourished by that knowledge, which is their appropriate food, if stimulated to a healthful activity, and allowed their due alternations of exercise and rest,—these higher powers will expand with a rapidity, and glow with an intense and joyous vitality, which has no parallel in the organic or unintelligent world;—and, if guided by right affections, they will become, in their maturity, not only the admiration, but the blessing of mankind. But, on the other hand, if these supplies, through the forming years of childhood, are meagre, or distasteful, or noxious, then will the season of manhood come on, unaccompanied either by the capacity or the inclination to perform the duties that will await it. It is not, therefore, in the power of a finite being adequately to conceive the difference between two teachers, one of whom teaches well, and imparts knowledge bountifully, while the other mingles such errors with his instructions, that his best recommendation consists in his imparting so little. The candidate for a school comes before the committee, asking permission to fill a stewardship, where his duty will be to distribute a rich repast of knowledge to the youth who may assemble around him, and who are hungering and thirsting for his bounty. And hence, the unimaginable difference between one who is able to give generously and to give constantly, and whose supplies are never exhausted, and another, who, from his indigence, doles out only crumbs and drops, and even then, is soon empty and dry. And what right has any one to expect fulness of resources for every emergency, and skill to impart to all, according to their wants, and in due season, if he has not replenished his mind by reading, nor matured his judgment by contemplation, nor sought instruction from the masters of the art? Knowledge and capacity, of this high nature, come not from instinct nor from intuition. Labor, and study, and toil, and an imitation of the best masters, alone have the prerogative of conferring them.

There is a teacher in this State, who, although he has labored constantly in his profession for thirty years, does not, even now, hear a recitation, without first going carefully over the lesson,—not so much to revise principles which must already be familiar to him, as to pre-adapt his questions and explanations to the different attainments and capacities of his pupils. When out of school, he spends many hours daily, in preparing for its exercises, and in devising the wisest means for correcting, by intellectual and moral influences, any remissness or waywardness in individual scholars. In these hours of study and contemplation, he enkindles in his own spirit that fervency of Christian love, and digests those plans of practical wisdom, by virtue of which, without ever resorting to corporal punishment or emulation, or appealing to any low motive whatever, he secures the greatest extent of intellectual proficiency, and fuses and remoulds the most refractory dispositions. The zeal and progress of the pupils in this school, correspond with the assiduity and conscientiousness of its teacher. What parent worthy of the name, would not submit to any sacrifice to secure such a teacher for his children, rather than to

employ one who, after spending a long summer on a farm, or in a shop, or in trafficking in small goods, from town to town, suddenly suspends his accustomed occupation, and, taking a small bundle of books under his arm, with a ferule conspicuously displayed on its outside, enters the school-room, without revising a lesson he is to teach, or bestowing a thought upon the principles by which he is to govern, but rashly trusting to extemporaneous light and inspiration for his guidance, in all cases of doubt or difficulty? Fertilizing and purifying influences are richly showered down, by the one, fulfilling the promise of a most luxuriant growth; while the other, not only destroys the hope of a harvest, but impoverishes the very soil on which it should have flourished.

During the last year, I have repeatedly visited schools, in towns where the plan of gradation has been adopted, and, on comparing pupils who are now in their fourth school year, under one instructor, with those who followed them, and are now in their second school year, under another, I have found the latter, not only in orderly habits, in pleasing manners, and in lively attention, but, in the amount of their literary attainments, actually surpassing the former, though under instruction less than half the time. And were it possible, by any mental chemistry, to neutralize or dissipate all the knowledge acquired by the younger department, still leaving them in possession of their habits of attention and application, they would soon overtake and again outstrip their seniors. No wealth which can be bequeathed to a child, can be so valuable as the fortune of attending such a school as the latter; and the great difference for the present,—the still greater difference for the future, which will result from these ennobling and enriching, or from those degrading and pauperizing influences, is resolvable into a single fact,—a difference in the qualifications of teachers.

I have dwelt thus long upon this subject, in the hope of conveying some idea, however inadequate, of the vast distance that lies between a good and a poor teacher,—how wide asunder they are;—and of showing that the law is not so unreasonable as has sometimes been supposed, since tests do exist, to which the committees can appeal, for the purpose of discriminating one class from the other.

The last reports of the committees exhibit proofs that the contrasts between teachers, are beginning to be more justly appreciated. And hence it is proper that all persons who are now aspiring to this responsible station, should know that if, in past times, ignorance and deficiency have been winked at, the keen and wide-opened eye of the public is now turning upon them, and exposure must follow delinquency.

In many towns the committees have established the practice of appointing a particular day and place, or where the number of districts is large, two or more days and places, for the examination of candidates for the summer and winter terms respectively. In one instance, certainly, if not in more, a vote has been passed by the town, that if the candidates do not appear at the appointed time, but make an extra meeting of the committee necessary, they shall themselves defray the expense of the extra session.

There is great advantage, as well as economy, in having all the candidates for the season examined at the same, and at an assigned time. All the members of the committee are more likely to assemble. The examination will be more faithful and thorough. After the examination is closed, an opportunity will be afforded to the committee, to make extended remarks, or even to deliver an informal address, on any of the various topics which the condition of the schools, or the appearance of the candidates, as disclosed on the occasion, may render most eligible. Nor is it unworthy of remark that this assembling of the teachers will furnish an opportunity to them for the commencement of a friendly acquaintance, and for making arrangements for weekly or semi-monthly meetings to be held by themselves during their ensuing term. Many teachers have gratefully spoken of the light and encouragement which these stated interviews have shed upon a path, otherwise dark and solitary.

I may remark in passing, that such meetings need not be confined exclusively to teachers. The town committee, the prudential committees,—any one, indeed, who can contribute to the interest or the usefulness of the occasion, should be welcomed. But it may not be superfluous to add, the caution that, if the assembly should become promiscuous in regard to its members, it should not be so in regard to its objects, but its discussions should always have a direct relation to the science or the art, the necessity or the utility, of common school education.

In passing in review the leading facts communicated by the committees' reports, there is one of a painful kind, though fortunately of limited extent, which I do not feel at liberty to omit; because, in an impartial survey of our school system, whatever

is adverse to its beneficent and comprehensive operation should be noticed, not less faithfully than that which is propitious.

In my report of last year, I referred to the harmony of opinion on an important subject, which, unmarred by a single discordant note, pervaded the reports of the committees from all parts of the State. According to that opinion, our schools are an institution to be sustained at the common expense of all the citizens, for the equal benefit of all their children; and they are, therefore, to be kept free from those controverted questions, whether political or theological, on which, unhappily, wide diversities of opinion or belief now prevail,—and must, indeed, continue to prevail until the happy day shall come when all men shall see "eye to eye." The statement which published the fact of this universal harmony of sentiment respecting the schools, amidst wide differences of opinion on other subjects, has been hailed with joy by the best friends of mankind, and quoted with warm commendation, in leading newspapers and periodicals of adverse parties, both in our sister States and in foreign countries. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been congratulated on having reached that point in civilization, where good men of all parties can coöperate for the promotion of a common object of acknowledged value, notwithstanding a want of unanimity on other subjects.

In repeating the statement, this year, I am compelled to make an exception in regard to the two small Shaker families, or communities, in the town of Shirley and Harvard. It appears by the reports of the committees of those towns, that these two villages withdrew themselves, during the last year, from the provisions of the general school law. The first named society refused to allow its teacher to be examined, or its school to be visited by the town's committee. I believe these to have been the first instances in the State, where an organized school district has assumed the right of absolving itself, on such grounds, from the supremacy of the law; and the course of proceeding seems to have been correctly described in one of the reports, as a "nullification" of the school law.

If such a case must arise, it seems fortunate that it has occurred amongst a sect, where the authority of numbers is not added to the weight of example. It is fortunate, too, that it has occurred in a place, where all the residents upon the territory embrace one faith, and where, therefore, the children of parents who hold other views, are not involved in the consequences of this violation of the law. Indeed, if others living within the same district, had been deprived by this course of their school privileges, we ought in charity to suppose that a measure so obviously unjust as well as illegal,—as in that case it would be,—would never have been adopted. If a difference of opinion, on collateral subjects, were to lead to secession, and to exclusive educational establishments among us, it is obvious that all the multiplication of power which is now derived from union and concert of action, would be lost; and the burden of supporting public and free schools which is now so easily borne by the united strength of society, would become so heavy as to crush the individual, and therefore, in the end, would cease to be assumed. Our only alternative, then, is mutual toleration, or the abandonment of the free school system, and with it, all hopes of a general education of the people. At first, indeed, a few classes whose views should most nearly resemble each other, might form an alliance against opponents separated from them by a broad line of distinction; but as soon as the common enemy should be overcome, intestine dissensions would succeed to foreign hostilities. It is a remark borne out by the concurrent testimony of all history, that when conflicting parties unite against a common foe, a conquest is no sooner achieved than the seat of the war is transferred to their own territory. Victory abroad is followed not by peace, but by strife, at home. It is also a remark which wants little of being universally true; that when disunion breaks out among members of the same fraternity, the bitterness of the feud increases, as the difference between the combatants becomes less. It can never be expected, therefore, that harmony amongst the victorious allies, will be one of the rewards of triumph. Apply these conclusions from universal history and experience, to our school system, and it becomes obvious that, if once the principle of secession be admitted, because of differences in religious opinion, all hope of sustaining the system itself, must be abandoned as fallacious. Nor does alienation spring from doctrinal differences only. The hostility between political parties is waged as earnestly as that between religious. Indeed the contest about political men and measures, occupies, at present, far more of the public mind than the contest for different modes of faith;—and, numerous

as polemical combatants and presses are, on subjects pertaining to the church, the combatants and presses on matters pertaining to the State, are a hundred to one. But supposing each religious and each political party to withdraw from its opponents, and establish its own schools, not one half of the latent elements of repulsion would have been developed. No cause, at the present day, draws broader lines of demarcation between citizens, neighborhoods and parishes, than that of abolition;—whether abolition in the generic sense, or those specific parties into which the original cause is now divided. The waters of bitterness which have been raised by the temperance movements, also, have not yet subsided; and, catching the general spirit of discord, even the champions of peace and non-resistance might insist upon exclusive institutions for themselves, at least for purposes of self-defence, if not of aggressive proselytism.

It must be apparent to all, that, before such a disastrous movement had half reached its consummation, our school system,—like the glory of the past, and the hope of the future, would be broken into fragments. In all our country towns, where reside, not only the numerical majority, but the strength of the State, a barrier of separation, high and thick as the Chinese wall, would be erected around every house, to save it from the contact and contamination of its neighbors;—nay, in many cases, several such walls must run through the same house, to protect members of the same family from the contagion of each other's heresy. Under such a disastrous and fatal course of policy, all of great and good which has been done for us by our venerated ancestors, through the instrumentality of our schools, would be speedily obliterated. Civilization would counter-march, retracing its steps far more rapidly than it had ever advanced; and, amid the impulses of human selfishness, and the rancor of spiritual pride, the heaven-descended precept, to "love one another," would practically pass into oblivion. The broadest and grandest social distinction which exists between our own times and the dark ages, consists in this,—that more persons, whose private interests or opinions conflict, can so far tolerate each other, as to unite their efforts and their resources, to promote the common objects of philanthropy. And, hence, it follows, that, whoever would instigate desertion, or withdraw resources, from the common cause, is laboring, either ignorantly or wilfully, to shroud the land in the darkness of the middle ages, and to reconstruct those oppressive institutions, of former times, from which our fathers achieved the deliverance of this country.

We need look no further than to a neighboring city, in a border State, to see the disastrous consequences of implicating the great and universal interests of education, with those of particular religious sects. For nearly two years, the city of New-York has been intensely agitated, by a question between Catholics and Protestants, respecting the distribution of the school fund; and, so comprehensive have now become the widening circles of the controversy, as to threaten to engulf the whole State in its vortex. We are not called upon to intimate an opinion, as to the merits of the respective parties to that unhappy controversy, but it would be blindness and fatuity in us, not to draw a practical moral, from so instructive a lesson.

In Great Britain, too, the progress of national education has been arrested, and all the late exertions of its pure and powerful and enlightened friends, have been paralyzed, because the predominating sect in that kingdom withholds its assent to any system whose religious influences it cannot control; while the different classes of dissenters, although willing to concede an equality of influence to their opponents, resist their monopoly of the whole.

Are not facts and considerations, like these, enough to admonish us, that, however much we may respect the two Shaker communities, in the towns of Shirley and Harvard, there is nothing, either in the motive which originated their "nullification" of the school law, or in any of the consequences to which such "nullification" tends, which should lead any party in the Commonwealth to acknowledge itself their imitator, by copying their example?

INEQUALITY IN THE MEANS OF EDUCATION.

The inequality in the means of education possessed by the children in the different towns and sections of the State, is a subject of great moment, and one not treated of in any former report. A comparison of the statistical returns for the last year, has developed facts not heretofore conceived of by the best informed friends of the cause.

Much has been, and much still continues to be, both said and written respecting that equality in the laws, and equality under the laws, which constitutes

the distinctive feature of a republican government. By abolishing the right of primogeniture, and entails, by the extension of the elective franchise, and in other ways, much has been done towards realizing the two grand conceptions of the founders of our government, viz., that political advantages should be equal, and then, that celebrity or obscurity, wealth or poverty, should depend on individual merit. But the most influential and decisive measure for equalizing the original opportunities of men, that is, equality in the means of education, has not been adopted. In this respect, therefore, the most striking and painful disparities now exist. One source of this difference, indeed, is to be found in the almost unlimited freedom of action exercised by the different towns in regard to their liberality or parsimony, in appropriating money for the support of schools, and their fidelity or remissness in the supervision of this great trust. In this respect, the towns resemble individuals. One parent will make all sacrifices, he will economize in his pleasures, dress, shelter, and even in his food, to save the means of educating his children; while another,—perhaps his nearest neighbor,—will sell the services of his children for a few pence a day, through the whole year, that he may hoard their earnings, or spend them in dissipation. The towns have been left, substantially, to the exercise of the same free will. It is true that the law, from time to time, has imposed certain obligations upon them; but these obligations they have generally obeyed or neglected, at their option. Indictments against them for non-observance of the law, have been very few, though their omissions to obey it, have been many. The judicial records of the State will show a hundred prosecutions against towns, for the defective condition of their roads or bridges, for one complaint on account of omissions or transgressions of the school laws. Some towns, through the influence of a few public spirited and enlightened individuals, have not only observed, but gone far beyond the requisitions of the law; while in other towns, where a few men of an opposite character have gained a preponderating influence, the schools have fallen far below its minimum requirements. On a broad survey of the State, and an inquiry into the causes which have led to the superior intelligence and respectability of some towns, as compared with others, it will almost uniformly be discovered, that the foundations of their prosperity were laid by a few individuals,—in some cases by a single individual,—in elevating the condition of their common schools.

Under these different circumstances, the most striking inequalities have grown up. According to the graduated tables inserted at the end of the school abstract, it appears that, in regard to the amount of money appropriated for the support of schools, the difference between the foremost and the hindmost towns in the State, is more than seven to one!

There were five towns which appropriated, for the last year, more than five dollars for the education of each child within their limits, between the ages of 4 and 16 years.

11 other towns appropriated more than \$4 for each child within the same years.

28	"	"	3	"
123	"	"	2	"
139	"	"	1	"
1	"	"	less than	1

The average of appropriations for the whole State, was two dollars and seventy-one cents, for each child between the above mentioned ages. No town, in the counties of Berkshire or Barnstable, came up to the average of the State, and in the county of Bristol, only one town, (New-Bedford,) equalled it.

If any one will take a map of the Commonwealth, on which the several towns are delineated, and with a pencil, enter the amount appropriated by each for the support of schools, he will be astonished at the difference between towns situated in the vicinity of each other; and oftentimes, at that between contiguous towns. Let the county tables be referred to, and it will be seen that towns standing at or near the head of the column, and those, which could stand at the head only on the condition that the order of precedence should be reversed; are towns which, geographically, lie side by side, or in the near vicinity of each other, and in regard to whose natural resources, or eligibility of location, there is but little difference. In taking the single step which carries us across the ideal line of separating one town from another, we pass through an immense moral distance. We pass, as it were, from the fertility of the tropical zone to the sterility of the frozen, without any intermediate temperate. It is a common device of geographers, for illustrating the different degrees of civilization or barbarism existing in different parts of the globe, to variegate the surface of a map with different colors and shades, from the whiteness which represents the furthest advances in civilization and

Christianity, to the blackness denoting the lowest stages of barbarism. A similar map has been prepared, representing the educational differences between the different departments in the kingdom of France. A map of the different towns of Massachusetts, drawn and colored after such a model, would exhibit edifying, though humiliating contrasts. It would show that, during the last half century, the most efficient cause of social inequality has been left to grow up amongst us unobserved; and it would furnish data for the prediction, to a great extent, of the future fortunes of the rising generation, in the respective towns. If all that has been said by the wise and good men of past times, respecting the efficiency of our common schools to fit children for the high and various relationships of life, be not a delusion, then the most instructive lessons concerning the future may be drawn from a comparison of present educational conditions.

No other fact has ever exhibited so fully the extent of obligation which some towns are under to a few individuals, who have had the forecast and the energy, in the midst of difficulties and opposition, to sustain their schools. I have met many individuals, who, having failed to obtain any improvement in the means of education in their respective places of residence, have removed to towns whose schools were good, believing the sacrifice of a hundred, or even of several hundred dollars, to be nothing in comparison with the value of the school privileges secured for their children by such removal. Still more frequently, when other circumstances have rendered a change of domicile expedient, has this principle of selection governed in choosing a residence. I doubt not there are towns, where parsimonious considerations relative to schools have obtained the ascendancy, which have actually lost more, in dollars and cents, by a reduction of taxable property and polls, than, in their shortsightedness, they supposed they had gained by their scanty appropriations, besides inflicting a sort of banishment upon some of their most worthy and estimable citizens.

It seems necessary here, to make a remark in explanation of the reasons for taking the number of children between the ages of 4 and 16 years, as the basis of computation in preparing the graduated tables. It may be suggested, that the estimate should be based upon the population or valuation of the respective towns, rather than upon the census of children. My answer is, that the school money is not raised for the population at large, but for the specific purpose of educating the youth; and the youth need the same amount of education on their own account,—the welfare of the republic, also, requires that they should be educated, up to a certain point,—wholly irrespective of the number of adults there may chance to be residing within the same territorial limits. So, in regard to valuation. The aggregate wealth of the town, whether great or small, as compared with that of other towns, has no bearing upon the question,—what amount of education ought the children to receive, both on account of their own and of the public welfare. Or, if this circumstance has any bearing, it only shows that the poorer a town may be, the better common school education should its children receive, as the surest means of laying the foundation-stones of its future pecuniary prosperity. That a town has but little property, is the last reason to urge, why it should have but little intelligence, little refinement and little moral culture. Each town in the Commonwealth, however comparatively poor, has abundant means for this purpose. The appropriations for schools, taking the whole state together, and, of course, including all the most liberal towns in the calculation, amounts to but one mill and two-thirds of a mill on the dollar. Hence, it is obvious that where a town alleges poverty as an excuse for the smallness of its appropriations, it must be understood to be, not poverty of the purse, but of the spirit. The town of Milton, which has the honor of standing at the head of the State, in regard to the liberality of its appropriations for the schools, levied a tax of only about three mills on the dollar, or three thousandths of its existing property, for this noble purpose. Surely, there is not a town in the State which cannot grant three parts in a thousand of its wealth for such an object, and never feel it but in a requital of manifold blessings.

Some further idea may be formed of the general feeling prevalent in different towns on the subject of appropriations for schools, from the fact that, in some towns it has been the practice for several years, for the school committee to report to the town what sum will be wanted for the ensuing year,—upon which the town votes the appropriation according to the estimate submitted. In one town, the prudential committees of the districts transmit an estimate to the town's committee of the sums deemed necessary for their respective districts,—the aggregate of these sums is made the basis of the superintending committee's

report to the town, and this report, in like manner, has been uniformly accepted. In some other towns, the committee expend whatever sum they deem necessary for the support of the schools;—at the close of the year, they report the amount expended, and this amount is at once covered by an appropriation in gross. These are specimens of the liberal spirit which already prevails in a considerable number of towns. On the other hand, there is an equal number of towns, the scantiness of whose appropriations rank them among the lowest in the State, where the rumor of an intention to increase the school tax brings to the polls a greater number of voters, adverse to the measure, than any other municipal question would call out.

But the amount of appropriation made by the towns, although it is one of the most obvious and palpable tests of the interest which they feel in the education of their children, is yet but one among many. The reasonable presumption is, that a town which makes liberal grants, will exercise wisdom and vigilance in expending the money it has raised. But this is not necessarily so; and hence the truth should be constantly kept before the public mind, that no amount of appropriations, though it should rise to the point of extravagance or prodigality, can be a substitute for vigilant inspection by the committee, and a pervading interest on the part of parents and guardians. It may happen then, that a small appropriation wisely expended, will be productive of as much good, as a much larger one, under a lax supervision, or wasted upon incompetent teachers. On a survey of the State, the contrasts between towns in these particulars will be found as striking, as in regard to the amount of money they grant. And, unfortunately,—the fact having but few exceptions,—the towns which raise least money, exhibit least care for its judicious expenditure; and thus, instead of restoring the equality between themselves and others, render wider the gulf of separation. A few facts from authentic sources of information, will present these contrasts in their true light. In some towns, the committees have been paid, for their services more than the sums fixed by law; in others, their bills have been arbitrarily cut down without reference to the legal allowance, or the time and money expended in the performance of their duties. In some towns, where the committee have made only the most moderate charge,—one far below the legal rate,—they have been rebuked, by being superseded in their office the ensuing year. In several towns, the inhabitants assembled in town meeting, after listening attentively to the annual report of the town's committee, have remained to hear selections read from the reports communicated to the Legislature by the Board of Education. In thirty-three towns, the reports of the committees have been printed for general circulation; but in other towns, there has been a refusal by vote, to allow even the reading of the committee's report in open town meeting, as required by law. In some towns, where an educational convention was to be held in the county, the teachers have not only been allowed to dismiss their schools for the purpose of attending it, but they have been furnished with horses and carriages to carry them to the meeting, at the town's expense; in others, the committees have refused to allow the teachers to dismiss their schools for the purpose of attending such meeting,—even at their own expense. In one town a teacher's library has been provided, the books of which are loaned to the teachers of the schools, after the manner of a circulating library, except that the loan is gratuitous; and in some others, a copy of the Common School Journal is furnished to each teacher at the public expense; in other towns, the teachers are not only unsupplied with books or other means of self-improvement, but they are obliged to furnish books for many of their scholars at their own expense, or submit to all the evils of an idle school.

This contrast might be pursued much further. The materials are abundant. Especially would it be instructive to enter into an extended comparison of different counties and towns, in regard to the ratio which the appropriations for public schools bear to the expenditure for private. Here it might be demonstrated that where the appropriations for public schools are liberal, and the interest in them strong, the education of the whole people is improved in quality and increased in quantity, while the aggregate of expense is diminished. In the adjoining counties of Middlesex and Essex, for instance, the amount expended in each, for education, in schools below the grade of academies, was last year as follows:

In Middlesex,.....	\$102,376 34
In Essex,	101,132 51
Difference,.....	\$1,243 83

But the portions of these sums expended for public, and for private schools, were as follows:—

In Middlesex, for education in the public schools,.....	\$81,390 60
In Essex, for education in the public schools,.....	56,948 60
Difference,.....	\$24,442 00
In Middlesex for education in the private schools,.....	\$20,985 74
In Essex,.....	44,183 91
Difference,.....	\$23,198 17

The grant of the city of Lowell for public schools, last year, was between \$16,000 and \$17,000, or almost a dollar for every inhabitant belonging to the city; the consequence of which was that the whole expense of private schools was reduced to \$1,500. In Northampton, the grant for the public schools was \$4,000, or considerably more than one dollar for each inhabitant in the town, while the whole expense for private schools was but \$100. Contrasts to these cases, where small grants for public schools have drawn after them the consequences of great expense for private, are so numerous, that a selection from among them would be invidious.

For the present, the general remark must suffice—a remark which, after five circuits made through all parts of the State, after a perusal and careful examination of every Return and Report made by the school committees, and after extensive correspondence and frequent interviews with the friends of education, I feel not wholly incompetent to make,—that, as a general fact, the great work of enlightening the intellect and cultivating the manners and morals of the rising generation, is going forward most rapidly and successfully in those towns whose appropriations are most generous; while, on the other hand, a non-compliance with the requisitions of the law, in employing unapproved teachers, in diverting school moneys to illegal purposes, in resisting a uniformity of books, and in the manifestation of indifference or hostility towards the measures recently adopted for the improvement of the schools, have most commonly been found in those towns whose appropriations look rather to the question, how little money will suffice to escape from penalty or forfeiture, than how much, through the alchemy of this institution, can be transmuted into knowledge and wisdom and virtue.

Here, then, it is obvious, are grounds of wide and permanent distinction, among the rising generation, as it happens to be their good or ill fortune to belong to one place or to another. As one State, where education is neglected and disdained, falls, in its wealth, in its social standing, and in the number of its distinguished men, below another State, where this great interest is fostered and exalted; so must some of our own towns fall below others, in all the elements of prosperity, and respectability, and honor. This, however, is a distinction which does not call upon the less favored portions of the community to curtail the privileges of the more favored, but to strive honorably to elevate themselves to a level with their fellows. It calls upon the more favored, also, by motives which should be all powerful, to lend a helping hand—to practice upon those political principles which regard all men as equals, and upon those Christian principles which regard all men as brethren, in elevating their inferiors to the height of their own standard. All other means ever devised by which to approximate the idea of a republican government, are insignificant when compared with the possession of equal educational privileges. Sumptuary laws for the rich, forced elevation of prices for labor, or a limitation of its hours with the same compensation, statutory valuations for articles of consumption, are all nugatory, while vast differences in the cultivation and training of the powers of body and mind, are constantly sending forth men, of corresponding differences in health, vigor, sagacity, forecast, prudence and wisdom. The government which should attempt to enforce an equality of external circumstances among men, while it permitted these educational inequalities to exist, would have daily and hourly occasion for the renewal of its work; for the officers who should execute its Procrustean edicts would not pass out of sight, before the frugal would begin to save, the prodigal to squander, and the idle to sell his ill-gotten share to the industrious,—before, in fine, the educated would leave the ignorant below them. But, if equal opportunities of improvement are offered to all, the responsibility of using or neglecting them may justly be cast upon each individual. Society does not exhibit a more instructive or salutary lesson, than those inequalities of actual condition which result from an unequal use of equal opportunities.

It was in the hope of seeing the opportunities of education more equally diffused, that I suggested, in a former report, the expediency of encouraging the

purchase of a common school library, for each school district, by the State's granting a small bonus or gratuity for the purpose. As I there intimated, the poorer and more sparsely populated districts will not be likely to obtain this indispensable auxiliary to a good school, without assistance from the government. So far, the result verifies the prediction. There have now been sold in the State, of the library prepared under the superintendence of the Board of Education, about three hundred sets; and, as a general fact, these have been purchased by the more wealthy and populous districts. A few districts, however, form a gratifying exception to this statement; for, though small in numbers, and of moderate wealth, these disadvantages have been counterbalanced by zeal and public spirit in their members. The number of public schools in the State, last year, was three thousand one hundred and three, so that there are now not less than twenty-eight hundred of our public schools destitute of a school library.

In 1839, when an investigation was made respecting the public libraries in the State, it was found that there were more than one hundred towns, (one-third part of the whole number in the State,) which had no town, social, or district school library; and, allowing every proprietor or share-holder in these kinds of public libraries to represent four individuals, the number of persons having a right of access to them would be but about one hundred thousand; leaving more than six hundred thousand of our population destitute of such a privilege. A good library, in every school district in the State, would prove one of the most efficient instruments of modern civilization.

I am aware that it may be, as it has been, alleged, as an argument against the State's offering any bounty, even for the promotion of so great an object, that, if any district or town will forego this important means of self-improvement, while its neighbors eagerly seize and enjoy it, it is the affair of such district or town alone—that they do but suffer the consequences of their own neglect, and their loss is only a just retribution for their delinquency. But this is a most incorrect representation of the case. It is the parents, who are neglectful of this great interest, but it is the children who suffer. The punishment overshoots the offender, and falls upon the innocent; for it is one generation that is guilty, and another on whom the penalty is visited. Hence, the case forms an obvious exception to the common rule, that justice must not be turned aside from its course, through commiseration for the offender.

Having now established, beyond the possibility of denial or doubt, the extraordinary and heretofore unrecognized inequalities existing between different towns in the Commonwealth, as it respects the educational advantages they bestow upon their children, the natural course of the argument would lead, at once, to an exposition or development of the consequences which must grow out of this wide departure, on each hand, from a common standard. To follow out the premises here established, to their legitimate conclusions, it should be shown what effect these different educational advantages will produce upon

1. The Worldly Fortunes,
2. The Health and Length of Life,
3. The Manners and Tastes, and
4. The Intellectual and Moral Character,

of the rising generation. This could be easily done, for the declination of the sun towards the southern tropic, is not more certainly followed by winter, with all its blankness and sterility, nor does the ascension of that luminary towards our own part of the heavens, more certainly bring on summer, with all its beauty and abundance, than does the want or the enjoyment of education degrade or elevate the condition of a people. But such an undertaking would be incompatible with the limits of a document like this. The most that can be ventured upon, is a brief reference to a single branch of the manifold subject.

For this end, I will occupy the short space which propriety allows to me, in concluding this report, by showing the effect of education upon the worldly fortunes or estates of men,—its influence upon property, upon human comfort and competence, upon the outward, visible, material interests or well-being of individuals and communities.

This view, so far from being the highest which can be taken of the beneficent influences of education, may, perhaps, be justly regarded as the lowest. But it is a palpable view. It presents an aspect of the subject susceptible of being made intelligent to all; and, therefore, it will meet the case of thousands, who are now indifferent about the education of their offspring, because they foresee no reimbursement in kind,—no return in money, or in money's worth, for money expended. The cooperation of this numerous

class is indispensable, in order to carry out the system; and if they can be induced to educate their children, even from inferior motives, the children, when educated, will feel its higher and nobler affinities.

So, too, in regard to towns. If it can be proved that the aggregate wealth of a town will be increased just in proportion to the increase of its appropriations for schools, the opponents of such a measure will be silenced. The tax for this purpose, which they now look upon as a burthen, they will then regard as a profitable investment. Let it be shown that the money which is now clung to by the parent, in the hope of increasing his children's legacies, some six or ten per cent., can be so invested as to double their patrimony, and the blind instinct of parental love, which now, by voice and vote, opposes such outlay, will become an advocate for the most generous endowments. When the money expended for education shall be viewed in its true character, as seed-grain sown in a soil which is itself enriched by yielding, then the most parsimonious will not stint the sowing, lest the harvest, also, should be stinted, and, thereby, thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold, should be lost to the farmers.

I am the more induced to take this view of the subject, because the advocates and eulogists of education have, rarely if ever, descended to so humble a duty as to demonstrate its pecuniary value, both to individuals and to society. They have expended their strength in portraying its loftier attributes, its gladdening, refining, humanizing tendencies. They have not deigned to show how it can raise more abundant harvests, and multiply the conveniences of domestic life; how it can build, transport, manufacture, mine, navigate, fortify; how, in fine, a single new idea is often worth more to an individual than a hundred workmen,—and to a nation, than the addition of provinces to its territory. I have novel and striking evidence to prove that education is convertible into houses and lands, as well as into power and virtue.

Although, therefore, this utilitarian view of education, as it may be called, which regards it as the dispenser of private competence, and the promoter of national wealth, is by no means the first which would address itself to an enlightened and benevolent mind; yet it will be found to possess intrinsic merits, and to be worthy of the special regard, not only of the political economist, but of the lawgiver and moralist. Nature fastens upon us original and inexorable necessities in regard to food, raiment and shelter. Though these physical wants are among the lowest that belong to our being, yet there is a view of them which is not sordid or ignoble. They must be first served, because if denied, forthwith the race is extinct. They domineer over us, and until supplied, their importunate clamor will drown every appeal to higher capacities. No hungry or houseless people ever were, or ever will be, an intelligent or a moral one. It is found that the church, the lecture room, and the hall of science, flourish best where regard is paid to the institution for savings. The divine charities of Christian love are often straitened, because our means of benevolence fall short of our desires.

I proceed then to show that education has a power of ministering to our personal and material wants beyond all other agencies, whether excellence of climate, spontaneity of production, mineral resources, or mines of silver and gold. Every wise parent or community, desiring the prosperity of their children, even in the most worldly sense, will spare no pains in giving them a generous education.

During the past year I have opened a correspondence, and availed myself of all opportunities to hold personal interviews with many of the most practical, sagacious and intelligent business men amongst us, who for many years have had large numbers of persons in their employment. My object has been to ascertain the difference in the productive ability,—where natural capacities have been equal,—between the educated and the uneducated,—between a man or woman whose mind has been awakened to thought and supplied with the rudiments of knowledge, by a good common school education, and one whose faculties have never been developed, or aided in emerging from their original darkness and torpor by such a privilege. For this purpose I have conferred and corresponded with manufacturers of all kinds, with machinists, engineers, rail-road contractors, officers in the army, &c. These various classes of persons have means of determining the effects of education on individuals, equal in their natural abilities, which other classes do not possess. A farmer hiring a laborer, for one season, who has received a good common school education; and, the ensuing season, hiring another who has not enjoyed this advantage, although he may be personally convinced of the relative value or profitableness of their services, yet he

will rarely have any exact data or tests to refer to, by which he can measure the superiority of the former over the latter. They do not work side by side, so that he can institute a comparison between the amounts of labor they perform. They may cultivate different fields, where the ease of tillage or the fertility of the soils may be different. They may rear crops under the influence of different seasons, so that he cannot discriminate between what is referable to the bounty of nature, and what to superiority in judgment or skill. Similar difficulties exist in estimating the amount and value of female labor in the household. And as to the mechanic also,—the carpenter, the mason, the blacksmith, the tool-maker of any kind,—there are a thousand circumstances which we call accidental, that mingle their influences in giving quality and durability to their work, and prevent us from making a precise estimate of the relative value of any two men's handicraft. Individual differences, too, in regard to a single article, or a single day's work, may be too minute to be noticed or appreciated, while the aggregate of these differences at the end of a few years, may make all the difference between a poor and a rich man. No observing man can have failed to notice the difference between two workmen, one of whom,—to use a proverbial expression,—always hits the nail on the head, while the other loses half his strength and destroys half his nails, by the awkwardness of his blows; but perhaps few men have thought of the difference in the results of two such men's labor, at the end of twenty years.

But when hundreds of men or women work side by side, in the same factory, at the same machinery, in making the same fabrics, and, by a fixed rule of the establishment, labor the same number of hours each day; and when, also, the products of each operative can be counted in number, weighed by the pound, or measured by the yard or cubic foot,—then it is perfectly practicable to determine with arithmetical exactness, the productions of one individual and one class as compared with those of another individual and another class.

So where there are different kinds of labor, some simple, others complicated, and of course requiring different degrees of intelligence and skill, it is easy to observe what class of persons rise from a lower to a higher grade of employment.

This too is not to be forgotten, that in a manufacturing or mechanical establishment, or among a set of hands engaged in filling up a valley or cutting down a hill, where scores of people are working together, the absurd and adventitious distinctions of society do not intrude. The capitalist and his agents are looking for the greatest amount of labor, or the largest income in money from their investments; and they do not promote a dunce to a station, where he will destroy raw material, or slacken industry, because of his name or birth, or family connections.—The obscurest and humblest person has an open and fair field for competition. That he proves himself capable of earning more money for his employer, is a testimonial, better than a diploma from all the colleges.

Now many of the most intelligent and valuable men in our community, in compliance with my request—for which I tender them my public and grateful acknowledgements—have examined their books for a series of years, and have ascertained both the quality and the amount of work performed by persons in their employment; and the result of the investigation is a most astonishing superiority in productive power, on the part of the educated over the uneducated laborer. The hand is found to be another hand, when guided by an intelligent mind. Processes are performed, not only more rapidly, but better, when faculties which have been exercised in early life, furnish their assistance. Individuals who, without the aid of knowledge, would have been condemned to perpetual inferiority of condition, and subjected to all the evils of want and poverty, rise to competence and independence, by the uplifting power of education. In great establishments, and among large bodies of laboring men, where all services are rated according to their pecuniary value, where there are no extrinsic circumstances to bind a man down to a fixed position, after he has shown a capacity to rise above it; where, indeed, men pass by each other, ascending or descending in their grades of labor, just as easily and certainly as particles of water of different degrees of temperature glide by each other,—there it is found as an almost invariable fact—other things being equal—that those who have been blessed with a good common school education, rise to a higher and higher point, in the kinds of labor performed, and also in the rate of wages paid, while the ignorant sink, like dregs, and are always found at the bottom.

I now proceed to lay before the Board some portions of the evidence I have obtained,—first inserting

my Circular Letter, in answer to which, communications have been made.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

To ————
DEAR SIR—My best and only apology for taking the liberty to address you, will be found in the object I have in view, which, therefore, I proceed to state, without further preface.

In fulfilling the duties with which I have been entrusted by the Board of Education, I am led into frequent conversation and correspondence, not only with persons in every part of the State, but more or less with every class and description of persons in the whole community.

I regret to say, that among these. I occasionally meet with individuals, who, although very differently circumstanced in life, cordially agree in their indifference towards the cause of common education; and some of whom even profess to be alarmed at possible mischiefs that may come in its train, and therefore stand in its path and obstruct its advancement.

The individuals who thus maintain an attitude of neutrality, or assume one of active opposition, are either persons who, in their worldly circumstances, are deemed the favorites of fortune; or, they are persons who are alike strangers to mental cultivation, and to all the outward and ordinary signs of temporal prosperity. In a word, they are found, in regard to their worldly condition, at the two extremes of the social scale. I would by no means, be understood to say, that any considerable proportion of the men of wealth among us, look with an unfriendly eye, on the general diffusion of the means of knowledge. On the contrary, some of the best friends of education are to be found amongst this class, who uniting abundance of means with benevolence of disposition, are truly efficient in advancing the work. Nor, on this subject, are the lines of demarcation between parties, broadly drawn, but they shade off by imperceptible degrees, from friends to opponents.

But this I do mean to say, that there are men of wealth and leisure, too numerous to be overlooked in a calculation of friendly and of adverse agencies, who profess to fear that a more thorough and comprehensive education for the whole people, will destroy contentment, loosen habits of industry, engender a false ambition, and prompt to an incursion into their own favored sphere, by which great loss will accrue to themselves, without any corresponding benefit to the invaders.

The other class are those who, suffering from a neglected or a perverted education in themselves, seem incapable of appreciating, either the temporal and material well-being, or the mental elevation and enjoyment, which it is the prerogative of a good education to confer. These two parties, though alien from each other, in all other respects, are allies here; and, although with the exception of a very few towns in the Commonwealth; they are not numerically strong, yet by adroitly implicating other questions with that of the Public Schools, they are able in many cases to baffle all efforts at reform and improvement.

The views of these parties I believe to be radically wrong, anti-social, anti-republican, anti-Christian; and I believe that all action in pursuance of them will impair the best interests of society, and originate a train of calamities, in which not only their advocates, but all portions of the community will be involved. Convinced that such is the inevitable and accelerating tendency of such views, it seems to me to be the duty of the friends of mankind to meet them, with fairness and a conciliatory spirit, indeed, but with earnestness and energy; and to confute them by the production of evidence and the exposition of principles.

It is for this reason that I address you, and solicit a reply founded upon your personal knowledge, to the following questions:

First,—Have you had large numbers of persons in your employment or under your superintendence? If so, will you please to state how many? Within what period of time? In what department of business? Whether at different places? Whether natives or foreigners?

Second,—Have you observed differences among the persons you have employed, growing out of differences in their education, and independent of their natural abilities; that is, whether as a class, those, who from early life, have been accustomed to exercise their minds by reading and studying, have greater docility and quickness in applying themselves to work; and, after the simplest details are mastered, have they greater aptitude, dexterity or ingenuity in comprehending ordinary processes, or in originating new ones? Do they more readily or frequently devise new modes by which the same amount of work can be better done, or by which more work can be done in the same time, or by which raw material or motive power can be economized? In short, do you obtain more work and better work with less waste, from those who have received what, in Massachusetts, we call a good common school education, or from those who have grown up in neglect and ignorance? Is there any difference in the earnings of these two classes, and consequently in their wages?

Third,—What, within your knowledge, has been the effect of higher degrees of mental application and culture upon the domestic and social habits of persons in your employment? Is this class more cleanly in their persons, their dress and their households; and do they enjoy a greater immunity from those diseases which originate in a want of personal neatness and purity? Are they more exemplary in their deportment and conversation, devoting more time to intellectual pursuits or to the refining art of music, and spending their evenings and leisure hours more with their families, and less at places of resort for idle and dissipated men? Is a smaller portion of them addicted to intemperance? Are their houses kept in a superior condition? Does a more economical and judicious mode of living purchase greater comforts at the same expense, or equal comforts with less means? Are their families better brought up, more respectably dressed, more regularly attendant upon the school and the church; and do their children when arrived at years of maturity, enter upon the active scenes of life with better prospects of success?

Fourth,—In regard to standing and respectability among co-laborers, neighbors, and fellow-citizens generally, how do those who have enjoyed and improved the privilege of

good common schools, compare with the neglected and the illiterate? Do the former exercise greater influence among their associates? Are they more often applied to for advice and counsel in cases of difficulty; or selected as umpires or arbitrators for the decision of minor controversies? Are higher and more intelligent circles for acquaintance open to them, from conversation and intercourse with which, their own minds can be constantly improved? Are they more likely to rise from grade to grade in the scale of labor, until they enter departments where greater skill, judgment, and responsibility are required, and which therefore command a larger remuneration? Are they more likely to rise from the condition of employees and to establish themselves in business on their own account?

Fifth.—Have you observed any difference in the classes above named, (I speak of them as classes, for there will of course be individual exceptions,) in regard to punctuality and fidelity in the performance of duties? Which class is most regardful of the rights of others, and most intelligent and successful in securing their own? You will of course perceive that this question involves a more general one, viz. from which of the above described classes, have those who possess property; and who hope to transmit it to their children, most to fear from secret aggression, or from such public degeneracy as will loosen the bands of society, corrupt the testimony of witnesses, violate the sanctity of the juror's oath and substitute as a rule of right the power of a numerical majority, for the unvarying principles of justice.

Sixth.—Finally, in regard to those who possess the largest shares in the stock of worldly goods, could there, in your opinion, be any police so vigilant and effective, for the protection of all the rights of person, property and character, as such a sound and comprehensive education and training, as our system of common schools could be made to impart; and would not the payment of a sufficient tax to make such education and training universal, be the cheapest means of self-protection and insurance? And in regard to that class which, from the accident of birth and parentage, are subjected to the privations and the temptations of poverty, would not such an education open to them new resources in habits of industry and economy, in increased skill, and the awakening of inventive power, which would yield returns a thousand fold greater than can ever be hoped for, from the most successful clandestine depredations, or open invasion of the property of others?

I am aware, my dear sir, that to every intelligent and reflecting man, these inquiries will seem superfluous and nugatory; and your first impulse may be, to put some such interrogatory to me in reply, as whether the sun has any influence on vegetable growth, or whether it is expedient to have windows in our houses for the admission of light? I acknowledge the close analogy of the cases in point of self-evidence; but my reply is, that while we have influential persons, who dwell with us in the same common mansion of society, and who, having secured for themselves a few well-lighted apartments, now insist that total darkness is better for a portion of the occupants born and dwelling under the same roof;—and while, unfortunately, a portion of these benighted occupants from never having seen more than the feeblest glimmerings of the light of day, insist that it is better for them and their children, to remain blind;—while these opinions continue to exist, I hold that it is necessary to adduce facts and arguments, and to present motives, which shall prove both to the blinded and those who would keep them so, the value and beauty of light.

HORACE MANN,
Secretary of the Board of Education.

P. S. If the above shall give you a general outline of my object, I would thank you to fill it up; even though parts of it may not be distinctly indicated by the questions.

LETTER FROM J. K. MILLS, ESQ.

Boston, Dec. 29, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have endeavored, since I received your letter, to collect such information as would enable me to answer your questions. The house with which I am connected in business, has had for the last ten years, the principal direction of cotton mills, machine shops and calico printing works, in which are constantly employed about three thousand persons. The opinions I have formed of the effects of a common school education upon our manufacturing population, are the result of personal observation and inquiries, and are confirmed by the testimony of the overseers and agents, who are brought into immediate contact with the operatives. They are as follows:—

1. That the rudiments of a common school education are essential to the attainment of skill and expertness as laborers, or to the consideration and respect in the civil and social relations of life.

2. That very few, who have not enjoyed the advantages of a common school education, ever rise above the lowest class of operatives; and that the labor of this class, when it is employed in manufacturing operations, which require even a very moderate degree of manual or mental dexterity, is unproductive.

3. That a large majority of the overseers, and others employed in situations which require a high degree of skill, in particular branches; which oftentimes, require a good general knowledge of business, and, *always*, an unexceptionable moral character, have made their way up from the condition of common laborers, with no other advantage over a large proportion of those they have left behind, than that derived from a better education.

A statement made from the books of one of the manufacturing companies under our direction, will show the relative number of the two classes, and the earnings of each. This will may be taken as a fair index of all the others.

The average number of operatives annually employed for the last three years, is 1,200. Of this number there are 45 unable to write their names, or about 3½ per cent.

The average of women's wages, in the departments requiring the most skill, is \$2.50 per week, exclusive of board.

The average of wages in the lowest departments, is \$1.25 per week.

Of the 45 who are unable to write, 29, or about two-thirds, are employed in the lowest department. The difference

between the wages earned by the 45, and the average wages of an equal number of the better educated class, is about 27 per cent. in favor of the latter.

The difference between the wages earned by 29 of the lowest class, and the same number in the higher, is 66 per cent.

Of 17 persons filling the most responsible situations in the mills, 10 have grown up in the establishment from common laborers or apprentices.

This statement does not include an importation of 63 persons from Manchester, in England, in 1839. Among these persons there was scarcely one who could read or write, and although a part of them had been accustomed to work in cotton mills, yet, either from incapacity or idleness, they were unable to earn sufficient to pay for their subsistence, and at the expiration of a few weeks, not more than half a dozen remained in our employment.

In some of the print works, a large proportion of the operatives are foreigners. Those who are employed in the branches which require a considerable degree of skill, are as well educated as our people, in similar situations. But the common laborers, as a class, are without any education, and their average earnings are about two-thirds only of those of our lowest classes, although the prices paid to each are the same, for the same amount of work.

Among the men and boys employed in our machine shops, the want of education is quite rare; indeed, I do not know an instance of a person who is unable to read and write, and many have had a good common school education. To this may be attributed the fact that a large proportion of persons who fill the higher and more responsible situations, came from this class of workmen.

From these statements, you will be able to form some estimate, in dollars and cents, at least, of the advantages even of a little education to the operative; and there is not the least doubt that the employer is equally benefited. He has the security for his property that intelligence, good morals, and a just appreciation of the regulations of his establishment, always afford. His machinery and mills, which constitute a large part of his capital, are in the hands of persons, who, by their skill, are enabled to use them to their utmost capacity, and to prevent any unnecessary depreciation.

Each operative in a cotton mill may be supposed to represent from one thousand to twelve hundred dollars of the capital invested in the mill and its machinery. It is only from the most diligent and economical use of this capital that the proprietor can expect a profit. A fraction less than one-half of the cost of manufacturing common cotton goods, when a mill is in full operation, is made up of charges which are permanent. If the product is reduced in the ratio of the capacity of the two classes of operatives mentioned in this statement, it will be seen that the cost will be increased in a compound ratio.

My belief is, that the best cotton mill in New-England, with such operatives only as the 45 mentioned above, who are unable to write their names, would never yield the proprietor a profit; that the machinery would soon be worn out, and he would be left, in a short time, with a population no better than that which is represented, as I suppose, very fairly, by the importation from England.

I cannot imagine any situation in life, where the want of a common school education would be more severely felt, or be attended with worse consequences, than in our manufacturing villages; nor, on the other hand, is there any, where such advantages can be improved, with greater benefit to all parties.

There is more excitement and activity in the minds of people living in masses, and if this expends itself in any of the thousand vicious indulgences with which they are sure to be tempted, the road to destruction is travelled over with a speed exactly corresponding to the power employed.

Very truly, yours, &c.

JAMES K. MILLS.

HON. HORACE MANN.

LETTER FROM H. BARTLETT, ESQ.

Lowell, Dec. 1, 1841.

HON. HORACE MANN—Dear Sir: In replying to your interrogatories, respecting the effect of education upon the laboring classes, I might be very brief, but the subject is one in which I feel so deep an interest, that I propose to go a little into detail, and hope to do so without being tedious.

I have been engaged, for nearly ten years, in manufacturing, and have had the constant charge of from 400 to 900 persons, during that time. The greater part of them have been Americans; but there have always been more or less foreigners. During this time, I have had charge of two different establishments, in different parts of the State.

In answering your second interrogatory, I can say, that I have come in contact with a very great variety of character and disposition, and have seen mind applied to production in the mechanic and manufacturing arts, possessing different degrees of intelligence, from gross ignorance to a high degree of cultivation;—and I have no hesitation in affirming that I have found the best educated, to be the most profitable help; even those females who merely tend machinery, give a result somewhat in proportion to the advantages enjoyed in early life for education;—those who have a good common school education giving, as a class, invariably, a better production than those brought up in ignorance.

The former make the best wages. If any one should doubt the fact, let him examine the pay-roll of any establishment in New-England, and ascertain the character of the girls who get the most money, and he will be satisfied that I am correct. I am equally clear that, as a class, they do their work better. There are many reasons why it should be so. They have more order, and system; they not only keep their persons neater, but their machinery in better condition.

But there are other advantages, besides mere knowledge growing out of a good common school education. Such an education is calculated to strengthen the whole system, intellectual, moral and physical. It educates the whole man or woman, and gives him or her more energy and greater capacity for production in all departments of labor. Minds formed by such an education are superior in the combination and arrangement of what is already known, and more frequently devise new methods of operation.

Your third inquiry relates to the effect of education upon the domestic and social habits of persons in my employ. I have never considered mere knowledge, valuable as it is in itself to the laborer, as the only advantage derived from a good common school education. I have uniformly found the better educated as a class possessing a higher and better state of morals, more orderly and respectful in their deportment, and more ready to comply with the wholesome and necessary regulations of an establishment. And in times of agitation, on account of some change in regulations or wages, I have always looked to the most intelligent, best educated and the most moral for support, and have seldom been disappointed. For, while they are the last to submit to imposition, they reason, and if your requirements are reasonable, they will generally acquiesce, and exert a salutary influence upon their associates. But the ignorant and uneducated I have generally found the most turbulent and troublesome, acting under the impulse of excited passion and jealousy.

The former appear to have an interest in sustaining good order, while the latter seem more reckless of consequences. And, to my mind, all this is perfectly natural. The better educated have more, and stronger attachments binding them to the place where they are. They are generally neater, as I have before said, in their persons, dress and houses; surrounded with more comforts, with fewer of "the ills which flesh is heir to." In short, I have found the educated, as a class, more cheerful and contented,—devoting a portion of their leisure time to reading and intellectual pursuits, more with their families and less in scenes of dissipation.

The good effect of all this, is seen in the more orderly and comfortable appearance of the whole household, but no where more strikingly than in the children. A mother who has had a good common school education will rarely suffer her children to grow up in ignorance.

As I have said, this class of persons is more quiet, more orderly, and I may add, more regular in their attendance upon public worship, and more punctual in the performance of all their duties.

Your fourth inquiry refers to the relative stand taken in society by those who have received an early education, and my answers to your inquiries under that head, might be inferred from what I have already said. My remarks before have referred quite as much to females as to males, but what I shall say under this, will refer particularly to the latter.

I have generally observed individuals exerting an influence among their co-laborers and citizens, somewhat in proportion to their education. And, in cases of difficulty and arbitration, the most ignorant have paid an involuntary respect to the value of education, by the selection of those who have enjoyed its benefits, for the settlement of their controversies.

It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for a young man, who had not an education equal to a good common school education, to rise from grade to grade, until he should obtain the birth of an overseer; and in making promotions, as a general thing, it would be unnecessary to make inquiry as to the education of the young men from whom you would select; for their mental cultivation would be sufficiently indicated by their general appearance and standing among their fellows; and, if you had reference to merit and qualifications, very seldom indeed would an uneducated young man rise to "a better place and better pay."

Young men who expect to resort to manufacturing establishments for employment, cannot prize too highly a good education. It will give them standing among their associates, and be the means of promotion from their employers.

Your fifth interrogatory refers to difference of moral character in the two classes, and the dangers which society or men of property have to apprehend from the one or the other. I do not know that I can better answer your inquiries under this head than to give you my views of the value, in a *practical* point of view, of education and morality to the stockholders of our manufacturing establishments. If they have no danger to apprehend from a general diffusion of knowledge among those in their employ, if it is a fact that that class of help which has enjoyed a good common school education, are the most tractable, yielding most readily to reasonable requirements, exerting a salutary and conservative influence in times of excitement, while the most ignorant are the most refractory; then, it appears to me that the public at large ought to be satisfied that they have more danger to apprehend from the ignorant than from the well educated. I am aware that there is a feeling to a certain, but I hope limited extent, that knowledge among the great mass is dangerous; that it creates discontent, and tends to incubation. But I believe the fear to be groundless and that our danger will come from an opposite source. In my view, there is a connection between education and morals, and I believe that our common schools have been nurseries not only of learning, but of sound morality, and I trust they will always be surrounded by such influences as will strengthen and confirm the moral principles of our youth, and I am confident that so long as that shall be the case, society is safe.

From my observation and experience, I am perfectly satisfied that the owners of manufacturing property have a deep pecuniary interest in the education and morals of their help; and I believe the time is not distant when the truth of this will appear more and more clear. And as competition becomes more close, and small circumstances of more importance in turning the scale in favor of one establishment over another, I believe it will be seen that the establishment, other things being equal, which has the best educated and the most moral help, will give the greatest production at the least cost per pound. So confident am I that production is affected by the intellectual and moral character of help, that whenever a mill or a room should fail to give the proper amount of work, my first inquiry, after that respecting the condition of the machinery, would be, *as to the character of the help*, and if the deficiency remained any great length of time, I am sure I should find many who had made their marks upon the pay-roll, being unable to write their names; and I should be greatly disappointed if I did not, upon inquiry, find a portion of them of irregular habits and suspicious character. My mind has been drawn to this subject for a long time. I have watched its operation, and seen its result, and am satisfied that the pecuniary interest of the owners is promoted by the general diffusion of knowledge and morality among those in their employ.

Lowell is a striking illustration of the truth of my remarks on this subject. Probably no other place has done as much

for the education and morality of those engaged in manufacturing. She has 23 public schools, 15 churches, and numerous associations for intellectual improvement;—and the result is seen, not only in the orderly and temperate character of the people, but in the great productiveness of the mills. And where, I would ask, is manufacturing stock of more value? If any one doubts the connection between these institutions and the price of stocks, let the former be destroyed, let those lights be extinguished, let ignorance and vice take the place of intelligence and virtue, let the prevailing influence here be against schools and churches, and my opinion is, that the moral character of the people would not decline faster than the price of manufacturing stocks. The founders of this place were clear and far-sighted men, and they put in operation a train of moral influences which has formed and preserved a community distinguished for intelligence, virtue and great energy of character. Should any owner or manager think otherwise and surround himself with the ignorant and unprincipled, because for a time he might get them for less wages, I am confident that loss in production would more than keep pace with reduction in pay,—to say nothing of the insecurity of property in the hands of such persons.

In short, in closing my answer to your fifth interrogatory, I consider that "those who possess property and hope to transmit it to their children," have nothing to fear from the general diffusion of knowledge;—that if their rights are ever invaded or their property rendered insecure, it will be when ignorance has corrupted the public mind, and prepared it for the controlling influence of some master-spirit possessing intelligence without principle.

Finally, in answering your sixth and last interrogatory, I remark that "those who possess the greatest share in the stock of worldly goods" are deeply interested in this subject as one of mere insurance,—that the most effectual way of making insurance on their property would be to contribute from it enough to sustain an efficient system of common school education, thereby educating the whole mass of mind, and constituting it a police more effective than peace officers or prisons. By so doing they would bestow a benediction upon "that class, who from the accident of birth or parentage, are subjected to the privations and temptations of poverty," and would do much to remove the prejudice, and to strengthen the bands of union between the different and extreme portions of society. The great majority always have been and probably always will be comparatively poor, while a few will possess the greatest share of this world's goods. And it is a wise provision of Providence which connects so intimately, and as I think so indissolubly, the greatest good of the many with the highest interest of the few.

Yours, very respectfully and truly,

H. BARTLETT.

LETTER FROM J. CLARK, ESQ.

Lowell, Dec. 3, 1841.

DEAR SIR—I owe you an apology for not having made an earlier reply to your inquiries respecting the influences of education upon the character and conduct of our operatives. I have to plead in excuse for my neglect an unusual press of business, which has almost literally occupied every moment of my time; and while I was seeking a leisure hour to devote to this purpose, my friend, Mr. Bartlett, has kindly allowed me to read the very full and particular answers prepared by him to your several interrogatories. [See preceding letter.] I find that Mr. Bartlett's experience and views upon the whole subject coincide so entirely with my own, that it would merely be a tax upon your time as well as mine, if I were to go in detail over the same ground. I will therefore only say, that during the last eight years I have had under my superintendence upon an average about 1500 persons of both sexes; and that my experience fully sustains and confirms the results to which Mr. Bartlett has arrived. I have found, with very few exceptions, the best educated among my hands to be the most capable, intelligent, energetic, industrious, economical and moral; that they produce the best work, and the most of it, with the least injury to the machinery. They are, in all respects, the most useful, profitable, and the safest of our operatives; and, as a class, they are more thrifty and more apt to accumulate property for themselves. I am very sure that neither men of property, nor society at large, have any thing to fear from a more general diffusion of knowledge, nor from the extension and improvement of our system of common schools.

I have recently instituted some inquiries into the comparative wages of our different classes of operatives; and among other results, I find the following, applicable to our present purpose. On our pay-roll for the last month, are borne the names of 1229 female operatives. 40 of whom received for their pay by "making their mark." Twenty-six of these have been employed in job-work, that is, they were paid according to the quantity of work turned off from their machines. The average pay of these twenty-six falls 18 1/2 per cent. below the general average of those engaged in the same department.

Again, we have in our mills about 150 females who have, at some time, been engaged in teaching schools. Many of them teach during the summer months, and work in the mills in winter. The average wages of these ex-teachers I find to be 17 1/2 per cent. above the general average of our mills, and about 40 per cent. above the wages of the twenty-six who cannot write their names. It may be said that they are generally employed in the higher departments, where the pay is better. This is true, but this again may be, in most cases, fairly attributed to their better education, which brings us to the same result. If I had included in my calculations, the remaining 14 of the 40, who are mostly sweepers and scrubbers, and who are paid by the day, the contrasts would have been still more striking; but having no well educated females engaged in this department with whom to compare them, I have omitted them altogether. In arriving at the above results, I have considered the net wages merely,—the price of board being in all cases the same. I do not consider these results as either extraordinary or surprising, but as a part only of the legitimate and proper fruits of a better cultivation and fuller development of the intellectual and moral powers.

Yours, very respectfully,

JOHN CLARK.

Superintendent Merimack Mills.

Hon. HORACE MANN, Boston.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER OF JONATHAN CRANE, ESQ., FOR SEVERAL YEARS A LARGE CONTRACTOR ON THE RAIL-ROADS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

My principal business for about ten years past, has been grading rail-roads. During that time the number of men employed has varied from 50 to 350, nearly all Irishmen, with the exception of superintendents. Some facts have been so apparent, that my superintendents and myself could not but notice them;—these I will freely give you. I should say that not less than 3000 different men have been, more or less, in my employment during the before mentioned period, and that the number that could read and write intelligibly, was about one to eight. Independently of their natural endowments, those who could read and write, and had some knowledge of the first principles of arithmetic, have almost invariably manifested a readiness to apprehend what was required of them, and skill in performing it, and have more readily and frequently devised new modes by which the same amount of work could be better done. Some of these men we have selected for superintendents, and they are now contractors. With regard to the morals of the two classes, we have seen very little difference; but the better educated class are more cleanly in their persons and their households, and generally discover more refinement in their manners, and practice a more economical mode in their living. Their families are better brought up, and they are more anxious to send their children to school. In regard to their standing and respectability among co-laborers, neighbors and fellow-citizens, the more educated are much more respected; and in settling minor controversies, they are more commonly applied to as arbitrators. With regard to the morals of the two classes before mentioned, permit me to remark, that it furnishes an illustration of the truth of a common saying, that merely cultivating the understanding without improving the heart, does not make a man better. The more extensively knowledge and virtue prevail in our country, the greater security have we that our institutions will not be overthrown. Our common school system, connected as it is, or ought to be, with the inculcation of sound and practical morality, is the most vigilant and efficient police for the protection of persons, property and character, that could be devised; and is it not gratifying that men of wealth are beginning to see that if they would protect their property and persons, a portion of that property should be expended for the education of the poorer classes? Merely selfish considerations would lead any man of wealth to do this, if he would only view the subject in its true light. No where is this subject better understood than in Massachusetts, and the free discussions which have of late been held, in county and town meetings, have had the effect to call the attention of the public to it; and I trust the time is not far distant, when, at least in Massachusetts, the common school system will accomplish all the good which it is capable of producing. Why do we not in these United States have a revolution, almost annually, as in the republics of South America? Ignorance and vice always have invited, and always will invite, such characters as Shakespeare's Jack Cade to rule over them. And may we not feel an assurance, that in proportion as the nation shall recover from the baneful influence of intemperance, so will its attention be directed pre-eminently to the promotion of virtue and knowledge, and no where in our country will an incompetent or intemperate common school teacher be entrusted with the education of our children.

These are a fair specimen, and no more than a fair specimen, of a mass of facts which I have obtained from the most authentic sources. They seem to prove incontrovertibly that education is not only a moral renovator, and a multiplier of intellectual power, but that it is also the most prolific parent of material riches. It has a right, therefore, not only to be included in the grand inventory of a nation's resources, but to be placed at the very head of that inventory. It is not only the most honest and honorable, but the surest means of amassing property. A trespasser or a knave may forcibly or fraudulently appropriate the earnings of others to himself; but education has the prerogative of originating or generating property, more certainly and more rapidly than it was ever accumulated by force or fraud. It has more than the quality of an ordinary mercantile commodity, from which the possessor realizes but a single profit as it passes through his hands;—it rather resembles fixed capital, yielding constant and high revenues. As it enjoys an immunity from common casualties, it incurs no cost for insurance or defence. It is above the reach of changes in administration, or in administrative policy; and it is free from those fluctuations of trade which agitate the market, and make it so frequent an occurrence, that a merchant who goes to bed a man of wealth at night, rises a pauper in the morning. Possessing these qualities, it has the highest economical value, and although statesmen who assail or defend, who raise up or put down, systems of commercial, manufacturing or agricultural policy, have seldom or never deigned to look at education as the grand agent for the development or augmentation of national resources, yet it measures the efficacy of every other means of aggrandizement, and is more powerful in the production and gainful employment of the total wealth of a country, than all other things mentioned in the books of the political economist. Education is an antecedent agency, for it must enlighten mankind in the choice of pursuits; it must guide them in the selection and use of the most appropriate means; it must impart that confidence and steadiness of purpose which results from comprehending the connec-

tions of a long train of events and seeing the end from the beginning, or all enterprises will terminate in ruin.

Considering education, then, as a producer of wealth, it follows that the more educated a people are, the more will they abound in all those conveniences, comforts and satisfactions which money will buy; and, other things being equal, the increase of competency and the decline of pauperism will be measurable on this scale. There are special reasons giving peculiar force to these considerations in the State of Massachusetts. Our population is principally divided into agriculturists, manufacturers and mechanics. We have no idle class,—no class born to such hereditary wealth, as supersedes the necessity of labor, and no class subsisting by the services of hereditary bondmen. All, with exceptions too minute to be noticed, must live by their own industry and frugality. The master and the laborer are one; and hence the necessity that all should have the health and strength by which they can work, and the judgment and knowledge by which they can plan and direct. The muscle of a laborer and the intelligence of an employer must be united in the same person.

The healthful and praise-worthy employment of agriculture requires knowledge for its successful prosecution. In this department of industry, we are in perpetual contact with the forces of nature. We are constantly dependent upon them for the pecuniary returns and profits of our investments, and hence the necessity of knowing what those forces are, and under what circumstances they will operate most efficiently, and will most bountifully reward our original outlay of money and time. In the presence of the savage, the exuberance of nature may cover the earth with magnificent forests, through whole degrees of latitude and longitude, and clothe and beautify it with the grasses and flowers of the prairie to whose ocean-like expanse the eye can discover no shore;—magnificent and poetic spectacles, indeed,—yet, for the sustentation of human life, for the existence and extension of human happiness, almost valueless. But under the art of agriculture, which is only another name for the knowledge of natural powers, millions are feasted on a territory where, before, a hundred starved. Perhaps there is no spot in the world of such limited extent, where there is a greater variety of agricultural productions than in Massachusetts. This brings into requisition all that chemical and experimental knowledge which pertains to the rotation of crops, and the enrichment of soils. If rotation be disregarded, the repeated demand upon the same soil to produce the same crop, will exhaust it of the elements on which that particular crop will best thrive; and if its chemical ingredients and affinities are not understood, an attempt may be made to reinforce it by substances with which it is already surcharged, instead of renovating it with those of which it has been exhausted by previous growths. But for these arrangements and adaptations, knowledge is the grand desideratum; and the addition of a new fact to a farmer's mind, will often increase the amount of his harvests more than the addition of acres to his estate. Why is it, that, if we except Egypt, all the remaining territory of Africa, containing nearly ten millions of square miles, with a soil, most of which is incomparably more fertile by nature, produces less for the sustentation of man and beast, than England, whose territory is only fifty thousand square miles. In the latter country, knowledge has been a substitute for a genial climate and an exuberant soil; while in the former, it is hardly a figurative expression to say, that all the maternal kindness of nature, powerful and benignant as she is, has been repulsed by the ignorance of her children. Doubtless, industry as well as knowledge is indispensable to productiveness; but knowledge must precede industry, or the latter will work to so little effect as to become discouraged and to relapse into the slothfulness of savage life. But without further exposition, it may be remarked generally, that the spread of intelligence, through the instrumentality of good books, and the cultivation in our children of the faculties of observing, comparing and reasoning, through the medium of good schools, would add millions to the agricultural products of the Commonwealth, without imposing upon the husbandman an additional hour of labor. It would be as foolish for us as for the African, to suppose that we have reached the ultimate boundary of improvement.

In regard to another branch of industry, the State of Massachusetts presents a phenomenon which, all things being considered, is unequalled in any part of the world. I refer to the distribution or apportionment of its citizens, among the different departments of labor. With a population of only eighty-seven thousand engaged in agriculture, we have eighty-five thousand engaged in manufactures and trades. The proportion, therefore, in this State, of the latter

to the former, is almost as one to one, while the proportion for the whole Union falls but a fraction below one to five. If to the eighty-five thousand engaged in manufactures and trades, are added the twenty-seven, (almost twenty-eight) thousand employed in navigating the ocean, and to whom, as a class, the succeeding views are, to a great extent, applicable, we shall find that the capital and labor of the State embarked in the latter employments, far exceed those devoted to agricultural pursuits.

Now for the successful prosecution,—it may almost be said for the very existence amongst us of the manufacturing and mechanic arts, there must be, not only the exactness of science, but also of exactness or skill in the application of scientific principles, throughout the whole processes, either of constructing machinery, or of transforming raw materials, into finished fabrics. This ability to make exact and skilful applications of science to an unlimited variety of materials, and especially to the subtle but most energetic agencies of nature, is one of the latest attainments of the human mind. It is remarkable that astronomy, sculpture, painting, poetry, oratory, and even ethical philosophy, had made great progress, thousands of years before the era of the manufacturing and mechanic arts. This era, indeed, has but just commenced; and already, the abundance, and, what is of far greater importance, the universality of personal, domestic and social comforts it has created, constitutes one of the most important epochs in the history of civilization. The cultivation of these arts is conferring a thousand daily accommodations and pleasures upon the laborer in his cottage, which, only two or three centuries ago, were luxuries in the palace of the monarch. Through circumstances incident to the introduction of all economical improvements, there has hitherto been great inequality in the distribution of their advantages, but their general tendency is greatly to ameliorate the condition of the mass of mankind. It has been estimated that the products of machinery in Great Britain, with a population of eighteen millions, is equal to the labor of hundreds of millions of human hands. This vast gain is effected without the conquest or partitioning of the territory of any neighboring nation, and without rapine or the confiscation of property already accumulated by others. It is an absolute creation of wealth—that is, of those articles, commodities, improvements, which we appraise and set down, as of a certain moneyed value, alike in the inventory of a deceased man's estate, and in the grand valuation of a nation's capital. These contributions to human welfare have been derived from knowledge—from knowing how to employ those natural agencies, which from the beginning of the race had existed, but had lain dormant, or run uselessly away. For mechanical purposes, what is wind, or water, or the force of steam worth, until the ingenuity of man comes in, and places the wind-wheel, the water-wheel, or the piston, between these mighty agents and the work he wishes them to perform; but after the invention and intervention of machinery, how powerful they become for all purposes of utility. In a word, these great improvements which distinguish our age from all preceding ages, have been obtained from nature, by addressing her in the language of Science and Art, the only language she understands, yet one of such all-prevailing efficacy that she never refuses to comply to the letter with all petitions for wealth or physical power, if they are preferred to her in that dialect.

Now, it is easy to show, both from reasoning, from history and from experience, that an early awakening of the mind, is a pre-requisite to success in the useful arts. It must be an awakening, not to feeling merely, but to thought. In the first place, a clearness of perception must be acquired, or the power of taking a correct mental transcript, copy or image of whatever is seen. This, however, though indispensable, is by no means sufficient. It may answer for mere automatic movements—for the servile copying of the productions of others. The Chinese excel in imitations of this kind; but, as they have little inventive genius, the learner echoes the teacher, the apprentice repeats the master; and thus the human mind, for generation after generation, presents the monotonous aspects of a revolving cylinder, which turns up the same phases at each successive revolution. But the talent of improving upon the labors of others, requires not only the capability of receiving an exact mental copy or imprint of all the objects of sense or reasoning; it also requires the power of reviving or reproducing, at will, all the impressions or ideas before obtained, and, also, the power of changing their collocations, of re-arranging them into new forms, and of adding something to, or removing something from, the original perceptions, in order to make a more perfect plan or model. If a shipwright, for instance, would improve upon all existing specimens of naval archi-

ture, he would first examine as great a number of ships, as possible; this done, he would revive the image which each one had imprinted upon his mind; and, with all the fleets which he had inspected, present to his imagination, he would compare each individual vessel with all the others, make a selection of one part from one, and of another part from another, apply his own knowledge of the laws of moving and of resisting forces, to all, and thus create in his own mind, the complex idea, or model of a ship, more perfect than any of those he had seen. Now, every recitation in a school, if rightly conducted, is a step towards the attainment of this wonderful power. With a course of studies judiciously arranged, and diligently pursued through the years of minority, all the great phenomena of external nature, and the most important productions in all the useful arts, together with the principles on which they are evolved or fashioned, would be successively brought before the understanding of the pupil. He would thus become familiar with the substances of the material world, and with their manifold properties and uses, and he would learn the laws—comparatively few—by which results, infinitely diversified, are produced. When such a student goes out into life, he carries, as it were, a plan or model of the world, in his own mind. He cannot, therefore, pass, either blindly or with the stupid gaze of the brute creation, by the great objects and processes of nature; but he has an intelligent discernment of their several existences and relations, and their adaptation to the uses of mankind. Neither can he fasten his eye upon any workmanship or contrivance of man, without asking two questions—first, how is it? and, secondly, how can it be improved? Hence, he has as great an advantage over an ignorant man, as one traveller, in a foreign country, who is familiar with the language of the people where he is journeying, has over another, incapable of understanding a word that he hears. The one, also, carries a map of the whole country in his head, while the other is without path or guide. Hence it is, too, that all the processes of nature, and the contrivances of art, are so many lessons or communications to an instructed man; but an uninstructed one walks in the midst of them, like a blind man amongst colors, or a deaf man amongst sounds. The Romans carried their aqueducts from hill-top to hill-top on lofty arches, erected at an immense expenditure of time and money. One idea—that is, a knowledge of the law of the equilibrium of fluids—a knowledge of the fact that water in a tube will rise to the level of the fountain, would have enabled a single individual to do with ease, what, without that knowledge, it required the wealth of an empire to accomplish.

It is in ways similar to this—that is, by accomplishing greater results with less means; by creating products, at once cheaper, better, and by more expeditious methods; and by doing a vast variety of things, otherwise impossible, that the cultivation of mind may be truly said to yield the highest pecuniary requital. Intelligence is the great money-maker, not by extortion, but by production. There are ten thousand things in every department of life, which, if done in season, can be done in a minute, but which, if not seasonably done, will require hours, perhaps days or weeks, for their performance. An awakened mind will see and seize the critical juncture; the perceptions of a sluggish one will come too late, if they come at all. A general culture of the faculties gives versatility of talent, so that if the customary business of the laborer is superseded by improvements, he can readily betake himself to another kind of employment; but, an uncultivated mind is like an automaton, which can do only the one thing for which its wheels or springs were made. Brute force expends itself unproductively. It is ignorant of the manner in which nature works, and hence it cannot avail itself of her mighty agencies. Often, indeed, it attempts to oppose nature. It throws itself across the track where her resistless car is moving. But knowledge enables its possessor to employ her agencies in his own service, and he thereby obtains an amount of power, without fee or reward, which thousands of slaves could not give. Every man who consumes a single article, in whose production or transportation the power of steam is used, has it delivered to him cheaper than he could otherwise have obtained it. Every man who can avail himself of this power, in travelling, can perform the business of three days in one, and so far, add two hundred per cent. to the length of his life as a business man. What innumerable millions has the invention of the cotton-gin, by Whitney, added, and will continue to add, to the wealth of the world—a part of which is already realized, but vastly the greater part of which is yet to be received, as each successive day draws for an instalment which would exhaust the treasury of a nation. The instructed and talented man enters the

rich domains of nature, not as an intruder, but, as it were, a proprietor, and makes her riches his own.

And why is it that, so far as this Union is concerned, four-fifths of all the improvements, inventions and discoveries in regard to machinery, to agricultural implements, to superior models in ship-building, and to the manufacture of those refined instruments on which accuracy in scientific observations depends, have originated in New England. I believe no adequate reason can be assigned, but the early awakening and training of the power of thought in our children. The suggestion is not made indelicately, but in this connection it has too important a bearing to be omitted,—but let any one, who has resided or travelled in those States where there are no common schools, compare the condition of the people at large, as to thrift, order, neatness, and all the external signs of comfort and competence, with the same characteristics of civilization in the farm-houses and villages of New England. These contrasts exist, notwithstanding the fertility of the soil and the abundance of mineral resources, in the former States, as compared with the sterile surface and granite substratum of the latter. Never was a problem more clearly demonstrated than that even a moderate degree of intelligence diffused through the mass of the people, is more than an equivalent for all the prodigality of nature. It is said, indeed, in regard to those States where there are no provisions for general education, that the want of energy and forecast, the absence of labor-saving contrivances and an obtuseness in adapting means to ends, are the consequences of a system of involuntary servitude; but what is this so far as productiveness is concerned, but a want of knowledge,—what is it but the existence of that mental imbecility and torpor, which arise from personal and hereditary neglect? In conversing with a gentleman who had possessed most extensive opportunities for acquaintance, with men of different countries and of all degrees of intellectual development, he observed that he could employ a common immigrant or a slave, and if he chose, could direct him to shovel a heap of sand from one spot to another, and then back into its former place, and so to and fro, through the day; and that, with the same food or the same pay, the laborer would perform this tread-mill operation without inquiry or complaint; but, added he, neither love nor money would prevail on a New Englander to prosecute a piece of work of which he did not see the utility. There is scarcely any kind of labor, however simple or automatic, which can be so well performed without knowledge in the workman, as with it. It is impossible for an overseer or employer, at all times to supply mind to the laborer. In giving directions for the shortest series or train of operations, something will be omitted or misunderstood; and without intelligence in the workman, the omission or the mistake will be repeated in the execution.*

It is a fact of universal notoriety, that the manufacturing population of England, as a class, work for half, or less than half the wages of our own. The cost of machinery there, also, is but about half as much as the cost of the same articles with us; while, our capital when loaned, produces nearly double the rate of English interest. Yet, against these grand adverse circumstances, our manufacturers, with a small per centage of tariff, successfully compete with English capitalists, in many branches of manufacturing business. No explanation can be given of this extraordinary fact, which does not take into the account, the difference of education between the operatives in the two countries. Yet where, in all our congressional debates upon this subject, or in the discussions and addresses of national conventions, has this fundamental principle been brought out,—and one, at least, of its most important and legitimate

* It once happened to me while travelling in one of the south western States, to visit an edifice of a public character, then almost completed. The building had a great number of apartments, which were to be warmed by means of a furnace placed in the cellar, after the manner in which most of our hospitals and large public edifices are warmed. Accordingly, one set of flues had been constructed for conveying the heated and pure air into all the apartments, and another set for conveying the foul air upward into the attic. So far it was well. But unfortunately for the transmission of the air in an upward current and for its escape from the attic when it should arrive there, the roof was completely closed in, neither window, sky-light nor aperture of any kind being left, through which it could find egress. The edifice had been built from a plan, and without a knowledge of principles. I regret to add that it was a State institution and had been erected under a Board of Commissioners, appointed by the Executive; and much delay and probably great suffering was endured before the building could be fitted for the reception and occupancy of any class of beings, dependent on breathing for existence. This was a very striking case, but every unintelligent man will make mistakes every day of his life, which are as important to him, and perhaps as ludicrous in the sight of others, as was this attempt of a Commonwealth, to ventilate a building where sixty or seventy persons were constantly to reside, by packing all the impure air snugly away in the garret! Nature will not abate one tittle of her laws, even to the mightiest earthly sovereign; but when the humblest individual obtains a knowledge of their exact and immutable operations, she protects him with heregis, and enriches him with all her bounties.

inferences displayed, viz., that it is our wisest policy, as citizens,—if indeed it be not a duty of self-preservation as men,—to improve the education of our whole people, both in quantity and quality. I have been told by one of our most careful and successful manufacturers, that on substituting, in one of his cotton-mills, a better for a poorer educated class of operatives, he was enabled to add twelve or fifteen per cent. to the speed of his machinery, without any increase of damage or danger from the acceleration. How direct and demonstrative the bearing, which facts like this have upon the wisdom of our law respecting the education of children in manufacturing establishments. What prominence and cogency, do they give to the argument for obeying it, if not from motives of humanity, at least from those of policy and self-interest! I am sorry to say that this benignant and parental law is still, in some cases, openly disregarded; and that there are employers amongst us, who say, that if their hands come punctually to their work, and continue at it during the regular hours, it is immaterial to them what private character they sustain; and whether they attend the evening school or the lyceum lecture on the week day, or go to church on the sabbath.

The number of females in this State, engaged in the various manufactures of cotton, straw-plaiting, &c. has been estimated at forty thousand; and the annual value of their labor, at one hundred dollars each, on an average, or four millions of dollars for the whole. From the facts stated in the letters of Messrs. Mills and Clark, above cited, it appears that there is a difference of not less than fifty per cent. between the earnings of the least educated, and of the best educated operatives,—between those who make their marks, instead of writing their names, and those who have been acceptably employed in school-keeping. Now, suppose the whole forty thousand females engaged in the various kinds of manufactures in this Commonwealth, to be degraded to the level of the lowest class, it would follow that their aggregate earnings would fall at once, to two millions of dollars. But, on the other hand, suppose them all to be elevated by mental cultivation to the rank of the highest, and their earnings would rise to the sum of six millions of dollars, annually.

I institute no comparison in regard to the company imported from England, who though accustomed to work in the mills of Manchester, could not earn their living here.

These remarks, in regard to other States or countries, emanate from no boastful or vain-glorious spirit. They come from a very different mood of mind, for I have the profoundest conviction,—and could fill much space with facts that would justify it,—that other communities do not fall short of our own, so much as we fall short of what we might easily become.

A few instances, of a familiar kind, exemplifying the axiom that "knowledge is power," will close this report.

M. Redelet, in his work, *Sur L'Art de Bâtir*, gives the following account of an experiment made to test the different amounts of force which, under different circumstances, were necessary to move a block of squared granite, weighing 1,080 lbs.

In order to move this block along the floor of a roughly chiselled quarry, it required a force equal to 758 lbs.

To draw the same stone over a floor of planks, it required a force equal to 652 lbs.

Placed on a platform of wood, and drawn over the same floor, it required 606 lbs.

By soaping the two surfaces of wood, the requisite force was reduced to 182 lbs.

Placed on rollers, of three inches diameter, and a force equal to 34 lbs. was sufficient.

Substituting a wooden for a stone floor, and the requisite force was 28 lbs.

With the same rollers on a wooden platform, it required a force equal to 22 lbs. only.

At this point, the experiments of M. Redelet stopped. But, by improvements since effected, in the invention and use of locomotives on rail-roads, a traction or draft of eight pounds is sufficient to move a ton of 2,240 lbs.—so that a force of less than four pounds would now be sufficient to move the granite block of 1,080 lbs.;—that is, one-hundred and eighty-eight times less than was required in the first instance. When, therefore, mere animal or muscular force was used to move the body, it required about two-thirds of its own weight to accomplish the object; but, by adding the contrivances of *mind* to the strength of *muscle*, the force necessary to move it is reduced more than one hundred and eighty times. Here, then, is a partnership, in which *mind* contributes one hundred and eighty-eight shares to the stock, to one share contributed by *muscle*;—or, while *brute strength* represents one

man, *ingenuity or intelligence* represents one hundred and eighty-eight men!

Dr. Potter, in his late work, entitled "The Principles of Science, applied to the Domestic and Mechanic Arts, and to Manufactures and Agriculture," has the following, p. 29 n.:

"The increasing powers of the steam-loom, are shown in the following statement, furnished by a manufacturer.

"A very good *hand-weaver*, twenty-five or thirty years of age, will weave two pieces of 9-8ths shirting a week.

"In 1823, a *steam-loom weaver*, about fifteen years of age, attending two looms, could weave seven similar pieces in a week.

"In 1826, a *steam-loom weaver*, about fifteen years of age, attending two looms, could weave twelve similar pieces in a week; some could weave fifteen pieces.

"In 1833, a *steam-loom weaver*, from fifteen to twenty years of age, assisted by a girl, about twelve years of age, attending four looms, could weave eighteen similar pieces in a week; some could weave twenty pieces."

Here, then, during a period of only ten years, the application of *mind* to a particular branch of business, enabled a lad of fifteen years of age, assisted by a girl of twelve, to do from nine to ten times as much work as had before been done by an accomplished and mature workman.

In the manufacture of needles, a number equal to twenty thousand, is thrown promiscuously into a box, mingled heads and points, and crossing each other in every possible direction. This happens several times during the various stages of manufacturing needles; and, in each case, it is necessary to arrange them lengthwise, or in a parallel direction. One would suppose, beforehand, that the picking out of twenty thousand needles entangled together, and forming, as it were, one great iron bur, and placing them all in a parallel direction, would be a formidable task, even for a week; and, also, that the operator would need some insurance on the ends of his fingers, or be obliged to submit to a very uncomfortable species of blood-letting. But, by a simple and ingenious contrivance, aided by a little slight of hand, the work is done in a few minutes. It is unnecessary to inquire, how much such ingenuity diminishes the price of needles, because, without it, there would be no needles at any price.

Not more than thirty years ago, it was uncommon for a glazier's apprentice, even after having served an apprenticeship of seven years, to be able to cut glass with a diamond, without spending much time, and destroying much of the glass upon which he worked. The invention of a simple tool, has put it in the power of the merest tyro in the trade, to cut glass, with facility and without loss. A man, who had a *mind as well as fingers*, observed that there was one direction in which the diamond was almost incapable of abrasion or wearing by use. The tool not only steadies the diamond, but fastens it in that direction.

The lathe, the old-fashioned spinning wheel, and the loom, by having a treadle for the foot, became equal to the addition of another hand to the workman.*

The operation of tanning leather consists in exposing a hide to the action of a chemical ingredient call-

* Without tools, that is, by the mere efforts of the human hand, there are, undoubtedly, multitudes of things which it would be impossible to make. Add to the human hand the rudest cutting instrument, and its powers are enlarged;—the fabrication of many things then becomes easy, and that of others possible, with great labor. Add the saw to the knife or the hatchet, and other works become possible, and a new course of difficult operations is brought into view, whilst many of the former are rendered easy. This observation is applicable even to the most perfect tools or machines. It would be possible for a very skilful workman, with files and polishing substances, to form a cylinder out of a piece of steel; but the time which this would require, would be so considerable, and the number of failures would, probably, be so great, that, for all practical purposes, such a mode of producing a steel cylinder might be said to be impossible. The same process, by the aid of the lathe and the sliding-rest, is the every-day employment of hundreds of workmen.—*Babbage on the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures.*

"The earliest mode of cutting the trunks of a tree into planks, was by the use of the hatchet or the adze. It might, perhaps, be first split into three or four portions, and then each portion was reduced to a uniform surface by those instruments. With such means, the quantity of plank produced would, probably, not equal the quantity of the raw material wasted by the process; and, if the planks were thin, would certainly fall short of it. An improved tool, the saw, completely reverses the case. In converting a tree into thick planks, it causes the waste of a very small fractional part; and, even in reducing it to planks of only an inch in thickness, it does not waste more than an eighth part of the raw material. When the thickness of the plank is still further reduced, as is the case in cutting wood for veneering, the quantity of material destroyed again begins to bear a considerable proportion to that which is used; and hence, circular saws, having a very thin blade, have been employed for such purposes. In order to economize, still further, the more valuable woods, Mr. Brunel contrived a machine which, by a system of blades, cut off the veneer in a continuous shaving, thus rendering the whole of the piece of timber available."—*Id.*

ed tannin, for a length of time sufficient to allow every particle of the hide to become saturated with the solution. In making the best leather, the hides used to lie in the pit for six, twelve, or eighteen months, and sometimes for two years;—the tanner being obliged to wait, all this time, for a return of his capital. By the modern process, the hides are placed in a close pit, with a solution of the tannin-matter; and the air being exhausted, the liquid penetrates through every pore and fibre of the skin, and the whole process is completed in a few days.

The bleaching of cloth, which used to be effected in the open air and in exposed situations where a temptation to theft was offered, (and in England, hundreds and probably thousands of men have yielded, and forfeited their lives,) is now performed in an unexposed situation, and in a manner so expeditious, that cloth is bleached as much more rapidly than it formerly was, as hides are tanned.

It is stated by Lord Brougham in his beautiful "Discourse on the Advantages of Science," that the inventor of the new mode of refining sugar, made more money in a shorter time, and with less risk and trouble, than perhaps was ever realized from any previous invention.

Intelligence, also, prevents loss, as well as makes profits. How much time and money have been squandered in repeated attempts to invent machinery, after a principle had been once tested, and had failed through some defect, inherent and natural, and therefore insuperable. Within thirty years, not less than five patents have been taken out, in England and the United States, for a certain construction of paddle-wheels for a steamboat, which construction was tested and condemned as early as 1810. A case once came within my own knowledge, of a man who spent a fortune in mining for coal, when a work on geology which would have cost but a dollar, and might have been read in a week, would have informed him that the stratum, where he began to excavate, belonged to a formation, lower down in the natural series than coal ever is, or according to the constitution of things, ever can be found. He, therefore, worked into a stratum which must have been formed before a particle of coal, or even a tree, or a vegetable, existed on the planet.

These are a few specimens, on familiar subjects, taken almost at random, for the purpose of showing the inherent superiority of any association or community, whether small or great, where *mind* is a member of the partnership. What is true of the above mentioned cases, is true of the whole circle of those arts, by which human life is sustained, and human existence comforted, elevated and embellished. Mind has been the improver, for matter cannot improve itself; and improvement has advanced in proportion to the number and culture of the minds excited to activity and applied to the work. Similar advancements have been effected throughout the whole compass of human labor and research;—in the arts of transportation and locomotion, from the employment of the sheep and the goat, as beasts of burden, to the steam-engine and the rail-road car;—in the art of navigation, from the canoe clinging timidly to the shore, to steamships which boldly traverse the ocean;—in hydraulics, from carrying water by hand, in a vessel, or in horizontal aqueducts, to those vast conduits which supply the demands of a city, and to steam fire-engines which throw a column of water to the top of the loftiest buildings;—in the arts of spinning and rope-making, from the hand-distaff to the spinning frame, and to the machine which makes cordage or cables of any length, in a space ten feet square;—in horology or time-keeping, from the sun-dial and the water-clock, to the watch and to the chronometer by which the mariner is assisted in measuring his longitude, and in saving property and life;—in the extraction, forging and tempering of iron, and other ores, having malleability to be wrought into all forms, and used for all purposes, and supplying instead of the stone-hatchet or the fish-shell of the savage, an almost infinite variety of instruments, which have sharpness for cutting, or solidity for striking;—in the arts of vitrification, or glass-making, giving not only a multitude of commodious and ornamental utensils for the household, but substituting the window for the unsightly orifice or open casement, and winnowing light and warmth from the outward and the cold atmosphere;—in the arts of induration by heat, from bricks dried in the sun, to those which withstand the corrosion of our climate for centuries, or resist the intensity of the furnace;—in the arts of illumination, from the torch cut from the fir or pine-tree, to the brilliant gas-light which gives almost a solar splendor to the nocturnal darkness of our cities;—in the arts of heating and ventilation, which at once supply warmth for comfort and pure air for health;—in the art of building, from the hollowed trunk of a tree, or the roof-shaped cabin, to those commodious and lightsome dwellings which betoken the taste and

competence of our villages and cities;—in the art of copying or printing, from the toilsome process of hand-copying, where the transcription of a single book was the labor of months or years, and sometimes almost of a life, to the power-printing press, which throws off sixty printed sheets in a minute;—in the art of paper-making, from the preparation of the inner bark of a tree, cleft off, and dried at immense labor, to the machinery of Fourdrinier, from which there jets out an unbroken stream of paper with the velocity and continuousness of a current of water;—and, in addition to all these, in the arts of modelling and casting; of designing, engraving and painting; of preserving materials and of changing their color, of dividing and uniting them, &c. &c.,—an ample catalogue, whose very names and processes would fill volumes.

Now, for the perfecting of all these operations, from the tedious and bungling process, to the rapid and elegant;—for the change of an almost infinite variety of crude and worthless materials into useful and beautiful fabrics, *mind* has been the agent. Succeding generations have outstripped their predecessors, just in proportion to the superiority of their mental cultivation. When we compare different people or different generations with each other, the diversity is so great that all must behold it. But, there is the same kind of difference between contemporaries, fellow-townsmen, and fellow-laborers. Though the uneducated man works side by side with the intelligent, yet, the mental difference between them, places them in the same relation to each other, that a past age bears to the present. If the ignorant man knows no more respecting any particular art or branch of business, than was generally known during the last century, he belongs to the last century; and he must consent to be outstripped by those who have the light and knowledge of the present. Though they are engaged in the same kind of work, though they are supplied with the same tools or implements for carrying it on, yet, so long as one has only an arm, but the other has an arm and a mind, their products will come out stamped and labelled, all over, with marks of contrast;—superiority and inferiority, both as to quantity and quality, will be legibly written on their respective labors. It is related by travellers among savage tribes, that when, by the help of any ingeniously-devised instrument or apparatus, they have performed some skilful manual operation, the savages have purloined from them the instrument they had used, supposing there was some magic in the apparatus itself, by which the seeming miracle had been performed; but, as they could not steal the art of the operator with the implement which he employed, the theft was fruitless. Any person who expects to effect, with less education, what another is enabled to do, with more, ought not to smile at the delusion of the savage, or the simplicity of his reasoning.

On a cursory inspection of the great works of art,—the steam engine, the printing press, the power loom, the mill, the iron foundry, the ship, the telescope, &c. &c.,—we are apt to look upon them as having sprung into sudden existence, and reached their present state of perfection by one, or at most by a few, mighty efforts of creative genius. We do not reflect that they have required the lapse of centuries, and the successive application of thousands of minds, for the attainment of their present excellence; that they have advanced from a less to a more perfect form, by steps and gradations almost as imperceptible as the growth by which an infant expands to the stature of a man; and that, as later discoverers and inventors had first to go over the ground of their predecessors, so must future discoverers and inventors first master the attainments of the present age, before they will be prepared to make those new achievements which are to carry still further onward the stupendous work of improvement.

Amongst a people, then, who must gain their subsistence by their labor, what can be so economical, so provident and far-sighted, and even so wise,—in a lawful and laudable, though not in the highest sense of that word,—as to establish, and, with open heart and hand, to endow and sustain the most efficient system of universal education for their children; and, where the material bounties of nature are comparatively narrow and stinted, to explore, in their stead, those exhaustless and illimitable resources of comfort and competency and independence, which lie hidden in the yet dormant powers of the human intellect?

But, notwithstanding all I have said of the value of education, in a pecuniary sense, and of its power to improve and elevate the outward domestic and social condition of all men, yet, in closing this report, I should do injustice to my feelings, did I abstain from declaring that to my own mind, this tribute to its worth, however well deserved, is still the faintest note of praise which can be uttered, in honor of so

noble a theme;—and that, however deserving of attention may be the *economical* view of the subject which I have endeavored to present, yet it is one that dwindles into insignificance when compared with those loftier and more sacred attributes of the cause, which have the power of converting material wealth into spiritual well-being, and of giving to its possessor lordship and sovereignty, alike over the temptations of adversity, and the still more dangerous seducements of prosperity,—and which,—so far as human agency is concerned,—must be looked to for the establishment of peace and righteousness upon earth, and for the enjoyment of glory and happiness in heaven.

HORACE MANN,

Secretary of the Board of Education.

Boston, January 1, 1842.

REPORT

Of the Committee on Colleges, Academies and Common Schools, on petitions for the repeal of so much of the act relating to Common Schools as directs the appointment of Deputy Superintendents

[IN ASSEMBLY, April 2, 1842.]

Mr. Maclay, in behalf of the committee on colleges, academies and common schools, to whom were referred certain petitions for the repeal of so much of the act relating to common schools, as directs the appointment of deputy superintendents, respectfully asks leave to

REPORT:

That your committee, impressed with the importance of this subject, and anxious faithfully to discharge their high duty, have given a full and patient consideration to the prayer of your petitioners. Convinced that the fortunes of the State are involved in the condition of its schools; that the preservation of our free institutions, the enjoyment of social and moral privileges, the diffusion of substantial good, and the prevention of countless human ills, are all dependent upon the education of those youth, who are daily crowding from these nurseries of a nation, into the stern arena of life; your committee feel the deep responsibility of touching a system that is involved with so many and such vital interests, and have weighed most carefully the statements on which such far-reaching changes are asked.

Your petitioners represent, "that the office of deputy superintendent is uncalled for, unnecessary, useless and expensive; that its duties were as well or better performed by town inspectors; that it is not additional superintendence that is most wanted, but money to pay competent and well qualified teachers; and" therefore, "they ask its abolition."

A brief history of the origin of this law, will of itself answer the most of these allegations.

In 1837, the Superintendent of Common Schools was authorized to appoint visitors in the several counties, empowered to examine and report the condition of the district schools, and to recommend plans for their improvement. In 1839, these visitors made their reports to the legislature; and while they differed in regard to the remedy of existing abuses, they were unanimous, that the schools were not affording that kind or degree of education essential to a free and sovereign people. They reported that a "large amount of the public money was utterly wasted;" that "from one-quarter to one-third of the school children were daily absent;" that "more than half of the school-houses were inconvenient and unfit for the purposes of education;" that "a wide spread and fatal apathy chilled the hopes of reform, and clogged all efforts for improvement;" and therefore earnestly asked that the "law should, in some manner, be amended so as to secure that constant and faithful supervision which would awaken parent, teacher and child to a sense of their deep and urgent responsibilities."

But they differed as to the remedy. It was proposed on the one hand, that a board of education should be established in every county, with powers adequate to the exigencies of the schools; but on consideration, its machinery was found to be so cumbrous, and the responsibility so weakened by division among numerous officers, that this project was abandoned. The other plan, and that which was almost unanimously recommended, was the Holland system of entrusting to one person, the supervision of a certain number of schools, making him responsible both to the people and to the head of the department, for the thorough and intelligent performance of his duties. This system, had in addition to more than twenty years of most triumphant experience in Holland, been tested in several cities and towns in our own country, where its results were already a matter of history.

In 1840, similar reports were received from about one-third of the counties, the visitors of the remaining counties refusing to discharge gratuitously so arduous an office, and demanding of the State, that "inasmuch as supervision was essential, the law should provide it."

In 1840, a bill was introduced in accordance with these representations of the visitors, but at so late a period in the session, that it only served the purpose of keeping the subject before the minds of the people. In 1841, another bill was reported, and after a most full and searching discussion, after being recommitted and reamended, was passed in the Assembly, by a vote of seventy-seven to twenty-one, (the negatives being nearly equally divided between the different parties;) and by

the Senate with but two dissenting voices; and in obedience to that law, deputy superintendents were appointed by the supervisors of the several counties, who entered upon their important duties about the 1st of November, 1841.

In view of this plain record of facts, your committee do not feel justified in agreeing with the petitioners, that this office was "uncalled for;" neither are they so far endowed with the spirit of prophecy as to declare in advance of all trial of its benefits, that it "is useless," and that "the same duties were as well or better performed by the town inspectors;" especially, inasmuch as the successive State Superintendents have, for many years, attributed to the general neglect of duty by these inspectors, many of the greatest evils that embarrassed the schools. Nor can they sanction the assertion that "what is most wanted is not additional supervision, but money to pay competent and well qualified teachers."

The withering "want" of our schools, is not money to pay, but intelligence to appreciate, and interest to sustain the competent teacher. The experience of Connecticut should not be lost on her sister States. Her fund enabled her to dispense with nearly all taxation, and the people lost their interest in the institutions they were not called on to cherish, until her schools became degraded and almost impotent. And were our public fund increased until it afforded means to hire a competent teacher for every district, without the public mind being simultaneously awakened to a juster estimate of the importance of education, and the means of its diffusion, your schoolmasters would soon sink into hirelings, soon become the exponents of the prevailing indifference and faithlessness of the people. And we therefore regard it as one of the most benign effects of this system of supervision, that by its exposure of the defects and evils of the schools, it must compel attention to the necessity of securing competent teachers. To learn how to make a shoe, or fit a coat, one must serve an apprenticeship for years; but in too many portions of our State, any one who can show his certificate, and who will teach cheap, is thought fit to be entrusted with the sacred and arduous duty of unfolding the wonderful powers of the infant mind, of training them for usefulness here and happiness hereafter.

We trust, however, that these things will no longer be; that hereafter, the most moderate attainments may not be thought equal to the most important duties, and that the people will eventually learn in the common school of experience, that nothing may be so dear as a cheap teacher. Let this lesson be learnt, and the heart of the people be touched by the wants and the dangers of their children in the neglected district school, and there will be no longer need of means to secure thorough and generous culture. Let the worth of education be once appreciated, and all needful sacrifices in its attainment, will be deemed indeed trifling.

And this brings us to the last allegation of your petitioners, that this supervision is "expensive."

The law, after abolishing the office of one town inspector, and in this manner saving in many counties more than the whole expense of the new system, provides "that the deputy superintendents shall be allowed two dollars for each day necessarily spent in the discharge of their duties;" that "the whole amount shall not exceed five hundred dollars for any deputy;" and that one-half of said amount shall be a county charge." If then a county has ten towns, each town is at the expense of *twenty-five dollars for the faithful supervision of its schools!* But inasmuch as the certificates given by the deputies are perpetual unless annulled, inspector's certificates will gradually become unnecessary, and in many towns more than this whole amount will be saved, and thus the law will actually diminish the expense, while it increases the efficiency of the system.

There is another view of this subject that should be kept before those who fear the expense of supervision. No one will deny that a vigilant and intelligent supervision of the schools, is as essential to their successful operation, as to that of any branch of industry. Without careful oversight no business can flourish, no enterprise will prosper. This principle is understood and acted on in all the common concerns of life. And if our common schools instead of being nurseries, where five hundred and sixty-two thousand children daily assemble to prepare themselves for usefulness and respectability, was each to be converted into a workshop or manufactory, and the fruits of the labor thus employed be made to constitute the revenues of the State, would not a vigilant and thorough supervision be deemed indispensable to the successful prosecution of the business? And need we urge the comparative value of an income to the state of dollars and cents, and an income of virtuous, intelligent, manly citizens, worthy of the soil they inherit, of the privileges they are to enjoy, defend and transmit to unborn generations? What consummate folly is it then, to appropriate million upon million for the support of our ten thousand schools, to set them in operation under teachers of doubtful qualifications and little experience, to leave them to go on as they best may, in vain reliance on some supposed inherent self regulating principle in the system, and yet expect to receive the full benefits which the expenditure of so much money, the services of so many teachers and the time of so many children ought to confer? The incalculable loss consequent on this vain dependence, we leave to others to estimate: our arithmetic has no rules for calculating the worth of that virtue, intelligence and happiness, which the neglect or perversion of the means of education has already lost to the state. But there is

an economical view of this matter within the power of figures, which we would earnestly commend to the consideration of those who are satisfied with the condition of the schools under the old law. It appears from the report of 1841, that over \$1,100,000 were spent during 1839, for the support of the district schools. During the same year from the reports of the visitors and other sources of authentic information, it is certain that nearly one-third of all the school children of the state were daily absent. Assuming the number, however, to be but one quarter, it follows that more than one hundred and fifty thousand children have constantly lost the advantage of this great expenditure; or in other words, more than \$250,000 has been utterly wasted. For it must be remembered that this large appropriation is for the benefit of all, and that it is so far unproductive, as it fails of accomplishing its destined object; and as an average of less than three quarters of the children attend on the schools, it is therefore evident that the money only produces three quarters of its expected fruits; the other quarter is wholly barren, and thus there is an actual waste of money to the state, exceeding two hundred and fifty thousand dollars annually.

But it may be urged that all of these children attend at least a few days, and thus receive some benefit. Is the evil any less that the education of nearly all the children in this state, is constantly interrupted, confused and impaired by irregular attendance, than it would be if a quarter of the whole number never went to school and the residue received a thorough, enlarged and safe education? It would, we admit, be more apparent if the evil were thus concentrated but it by no means follows, that it would be more aggravated or dangerous.

But this exposition shows not the extent of the evil, it hardly approximates it. The child who absents himself one day of the week, not only loses that day's study, and with it a portion of that interest in the pursuit of knowledge which is essential to advancement; but also impairs the rights and lessens the advantages of his more regular classmates. For these incessant absences dishearten the teacher, and confuse and disorganize the school, rendering classification impracticable and systematic study utterly impossible. In this manner, the evil pervades the whole school, the absence of one proves an injury to all, and the money of the state, besides losing one quarter of its efficacy by the non-attendance of the children, loses perhaps as much more from the injury such absences inflict on others.

Nor is it by the wasteful application of the public money alone, that the state suffers even in an economical point of view, but infinitely more by impairing the productive energies of her citizens through a defective and baneful education. Were it necessary, it might be shown beyond the reach of cavil, that if the sole object of the statesman were to increase the wealth of the people, without having any reference to their moral and intellectual well being, in no way could it be so rapidly and universally accomplished, as by increasing the power intelligently to use the means of prosperity. We have before us the most remarkable statistics on this point, showing that even in those employments, which would seem to require but the lowest degree of mental culture, as that of tending the looms in our factories, the operative who has enjoyed the benefits of an ordinary school education, earns on an average 29 per cent more than his ignorant associates, while he who has improved the advantages of the common school, earns 44 per cent more than the same unfortunate and neglected class. And these facts are not inferred from a limited observation, but they are the result of extensive investigations made by the distinguished secretary of the board of education of Massachusetts.

If, therefore, as we hold is indisputable, the new system of supervision must increase the efficiency of our ten thousand schools, it is certain that instead of adding in any manner to the "expense" of the county, it will largely and beneficently increase its wealth, while it also insures the wise use and enjoyment of the rewards of intelligent industry.

Your committee, therefore are not in favor of abolishing the office of deputy superintendent and returning to the old system; neither are they willing to prejudice the efforts now making to renovate the schools. The law is commended to a fair and full trial by every consideration that can influence the public judgment. Its origin was the people. In every part of the State, the reflecting were dissatisfied with the workings of the old system, and in many, the distribution of the public money was believed to be an injury rather than a blessing. The head of the department, on whom the action of the whole system mainly depends, could not, under the old law, be acquainted with the local wants and evils of the system; the returns made to the State office, being confined to but few particulars, and affording only means of probable conjecture instead of actual and useful knowledge. In fact the system wanted unity, energy and progress, and its schools were often grossly defective, and sometimes a bane instead of a blessing to the State.

Under these circumstances the law amending the common school system was passed by a large vote, irrespective of party, and after a thorough and anxious investigation of all its provisions. And your committee are satisfied that the people are determined to give it a full and fair trial.

Our report has already extended too far, but we should fail in duty to your honorable body, and in justice to the deputies, did we not express our sincere interest in the result of their important labors. We believe that the value of the office can hardly be overrated; and that if

in any county it should fail of utility, it will be chargeable not on the law, but on an injudicious appointment under its provisions. In such cases the remedy is in the hands of the board of supervisors, and should be firmly and prudently applied. But judging from the communications of these officers, already made to the department, we are satisfied that not only is the system working well, but daily gaining a firm seated popularity. The visitation of districts has been carried on in every county of the State; good methods of teaching have been diffused, and bad plans corrected; the interest of parents has been awakened, the ardor of the children excited, the zeal of the teacher aroused and directed: and this has been going on, not in a few districts or a few towns, but in more than ten thousand different districts, and among more than half a million of children. Such an enterprise, so far-reaching and effective, cannot fail to produce a rich harvest of blessings, and we confidently anticipate that it will fast bring on the time when our common schools shall become the fit nurseries of a free and virtuous people, when the children of all classes will be proud to meet on this common platform, there to learn the first great lesson of their common brotherhood as men, and their common destiny as citizens.

Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioners be not granted.

TEACHER'S CONVENTION.

[The teachers of Orleans county have made a demonstration which we trust will be responded to throughout the state. Their resolutions are not "mere matters of course," but significant and vivid statements of the evils that degrade our schools, and the means of carrying on that reformation which is in truth a blessing; and we cannot forbear expressing our high gratification that they have so zealously given their co-operation to the cause of general education.—Ed.]

At a meeting of the Teachers of Orleans county, held agreeably to a previous call, at the Court House in Albion, on Friday and Saturday, March 11th and 12th, ALMANZOR HUTCHINSON, of Gaines, was called to the Chair, and J. W. ANGELL, of Barre, chosen Secretary.

The following committees were appointed:
On Resolutions—J. W. Angell, A. G. Randall, V. W. Paine.

On Teacher's Associations—N. W. Butts, I. B. Taylor, and B. S. Treadwell.

The Convention were favored during their session, with several able, instructive and interesting addresses, from H. W. De Puy, O. Nicholson, N. W. Butts, J. W. Angell, L. C. Paine, W. Noble, J. W. French, and H. R. Curtis.

A Teacher's Association was formed, and the following officers appointed:

President.

GARDNER GOOLD, Carlton.

Vice Presidents.

A. HUTCHINSON, Gaines, ASA B. MOORE, Shelby,
J. M. GROW, Carlton, JAMES BURNS, Barre,
B. DENSMORE, Kendall, BERRY, Murray,
JOHN H. TYLER, Yates, LYMAN BATES, Ridgeway.
H. REED, Clarendon,

Secretary.

JOHN W. ANGELL.

The following resolutions, after considerable discussion, were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the welfare of our beloved country and the safety and perpetuity of our civil and religious institutions, depend, in a pre-eminent degree, upon a thorough system of education.

Resolved, That while much has been accomplished, both by public and private effort, for the education of the schools, still they fail in many instances to meet the just expectations of the friends of education, and are often lamentably deficient in the great requisites of a systematic and efficient method of instruction, suitable and commodious buildings, and well qualified instructors.

Resolved, That the establishment of private or select schools has a tendency to repress the growth and elevation of District Schools, by withdrawing from the latter the patronage and interest of influential public spirited men, thereby creating an anti-republican distinction between the rich and the poor, rendering the district schools unpopular, and consequently less prosperous and useful; and that we believe the only remedy to consist in the employment of common school teachers, who are thoroughly qualified to teach, and where the schools are large, in adding assistant teachers, sufficient to ensure every pupil the same attention bestowed in select schools.

Resolved, That owing to the low rate of wages offered to teachers, there is not sufficient inducement held out to young men of talent and enterprise, to engage in the business of common school teaching as a profession, and that until all the laws of human action are reversed, cheap teachers will be poor teachers.

Resolved, That the apathy and want of interest which prevents parents from personally visiting and inspecting their schools, are the principal causes of many difficulties and evils, that are now solely attributed to the want of energy and qualifications in the teachers.

Resolved, That we hail the recent legislative action, in appointing County Superintendents of Common Schools, as evincing a disposition on the part of law

makers, to co-operate with the friends of education in all salutary improvements; and that the ability, energy, and faithfulness, with which these officers are discharging their arduous and responsible duties, not only reflect the highest credit upon themselves, but vindicates, in the most efficient manner, the wisdom and the expediency of the law under which they have been chosen.

Resolved, That we here unitedly pledge ourselves to use every proper means to endeavor to raise the character of our common schools to such a degree of efficiency, that they shall become what they long since ought to have been, the best nurseries of learning in the land.

Resolved, That we believe the District School Journal an important auxiliary in the cause of educational improvement, and feel it our duty to recommend it to the communities in which we associate, and to do all we can to aid its circulation.

Resolved, That the efforts of Mr. E. R. Reynolds, since his appointment as Deputy Superintendent, have been followed with success throughout this County; and that they deserve the approbation of all who are interested in the improvement of our common Schools.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention be tendered to the gentlemen who have delivered addresses before it.

Resolved, That the editors in this county and Mr. Dwight, of the District School Journal, be requested to insert the proceedings of this Convention.

Adjourned to the second Saturday in October next.

ALMANZOR HUTCHINSON, Pres't.

J. W. ANGELL, Sec'y.

COMMON SCHOOL CELEBRATION IN SHELBY.

[This is another pleasing indication of awakening interest in our common schools. Similar signs of the times may be found in almost every county of the state; and we hail with joy their promise to bless with virtue and intelligence, those who are fast crowding into our places on the stage of life. It has been well said that "knowledge invigorated and purified by virtue fears no reaction."—Ed.]

Pursuant to public notice, the several schools in the town of Shelby, met in the Baptist Church in that town, on Saturday, Feb. 26th, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

Owing to the almost impassable state of the roads, in consequence of the late heavy storm of rain, a small attendance was anticipated—but at the hour for organizing, not an empty seat remained. The gallery, stairs, and space about the altar, were closely crowded with people.

The report of teachers on the condition of the schools—the diversity of text books, and irregular attendance of scholars, were received with great interest, and it is believed will produce much good.

C. BURROUGHS, Pres't.

MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE.

The Massachusetts legislature, for 1842, passed the following resolves:

"Resolves concerning Normal Schools and School District Libraries.

"1. Resolved, That the sum of six thousand dollars, annually, for three years, be, and the same is hereby, appropriated to the support of Normal Schools, under the direction of the Board of Education. And his excellency the Governor is hereby authorized, from time to time, to draw his warrant on the treasury for the same, on the application of said board.

"2. Resolved, That the sum of fifteen dollars, to be taken from the school fund, be, and the same is, hereby appropriated to every school district in the Commonwealth, to be expended in books for a school district library, and that the treasurer pay said sum, for said purposes, to the order of the mayor of every city, and the selectmen of every town, for each and every school district within the same, which shall have produced evidence of having raised and appropriated fifteen dollars or more for the same object.

"Approved March 3, 1842."

Though occupying but an inch or two of space upon the statute book, yet these resolves are intrinsically of greater importance than volumes or centuries of common legislation. Unlike the laws designed to act upon the material interests of the race, whose effects are turned aside by new developments of human action, and become obsolete by the lapse of time, these brief and simple provisions will be found to possess an inherent, perennial efficiency,—to be endued with a living spirit, ever-renewing and ever-expanding, which will work outward until it reaches all contemporaries, and onward until it blesses all posterity.

STATE EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

George Davidson, of Galway, Saratoga county, is appointed agent of the State Educational Society for the fourth senatorial district.

FRANCIS DWIGHT, Recording Sec'y.

FROM THE STEAM-PRESS OF C. VAN BENTHUYSEN.